



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

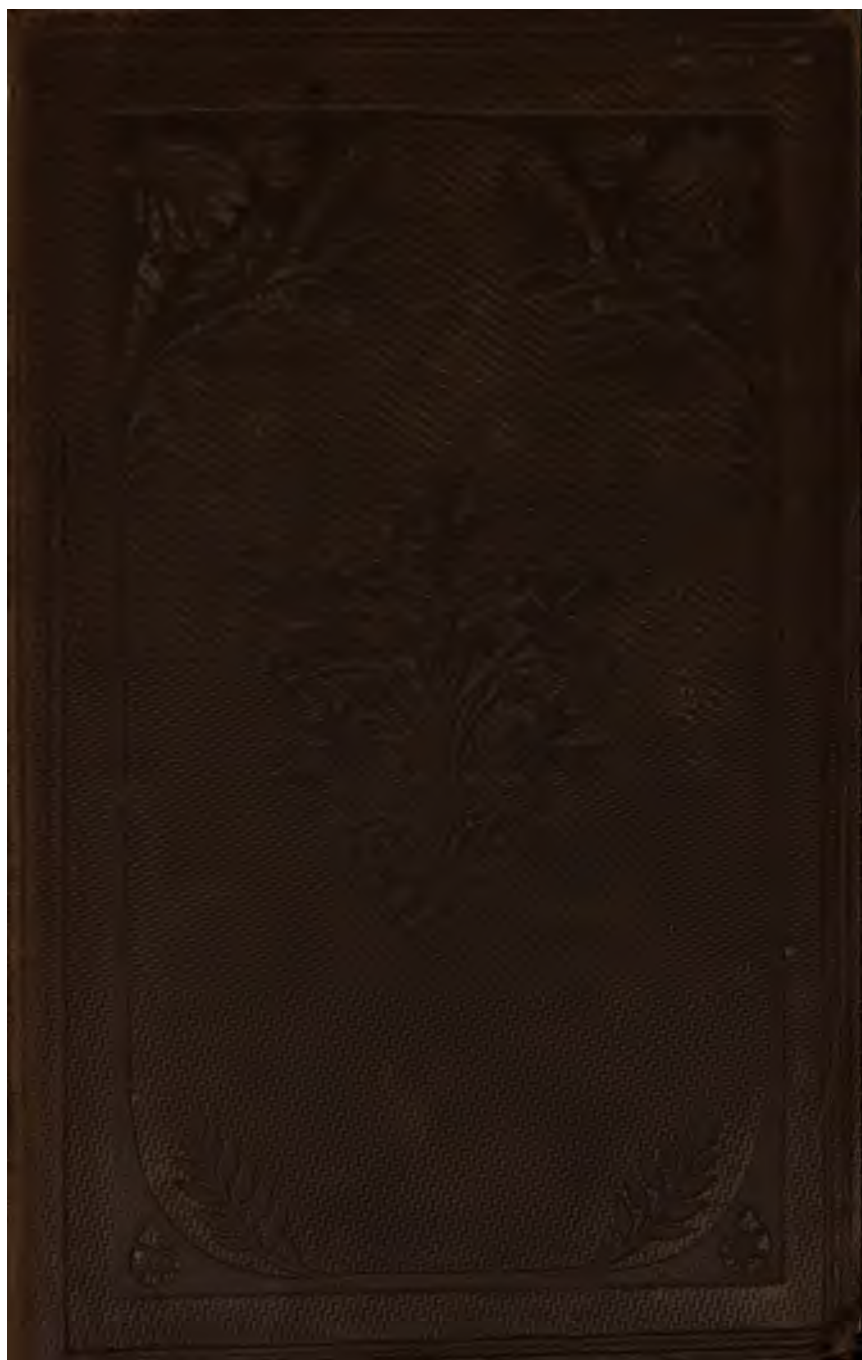
Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>





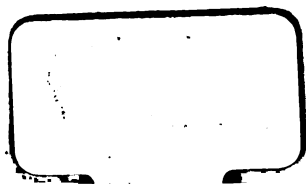
600017747W





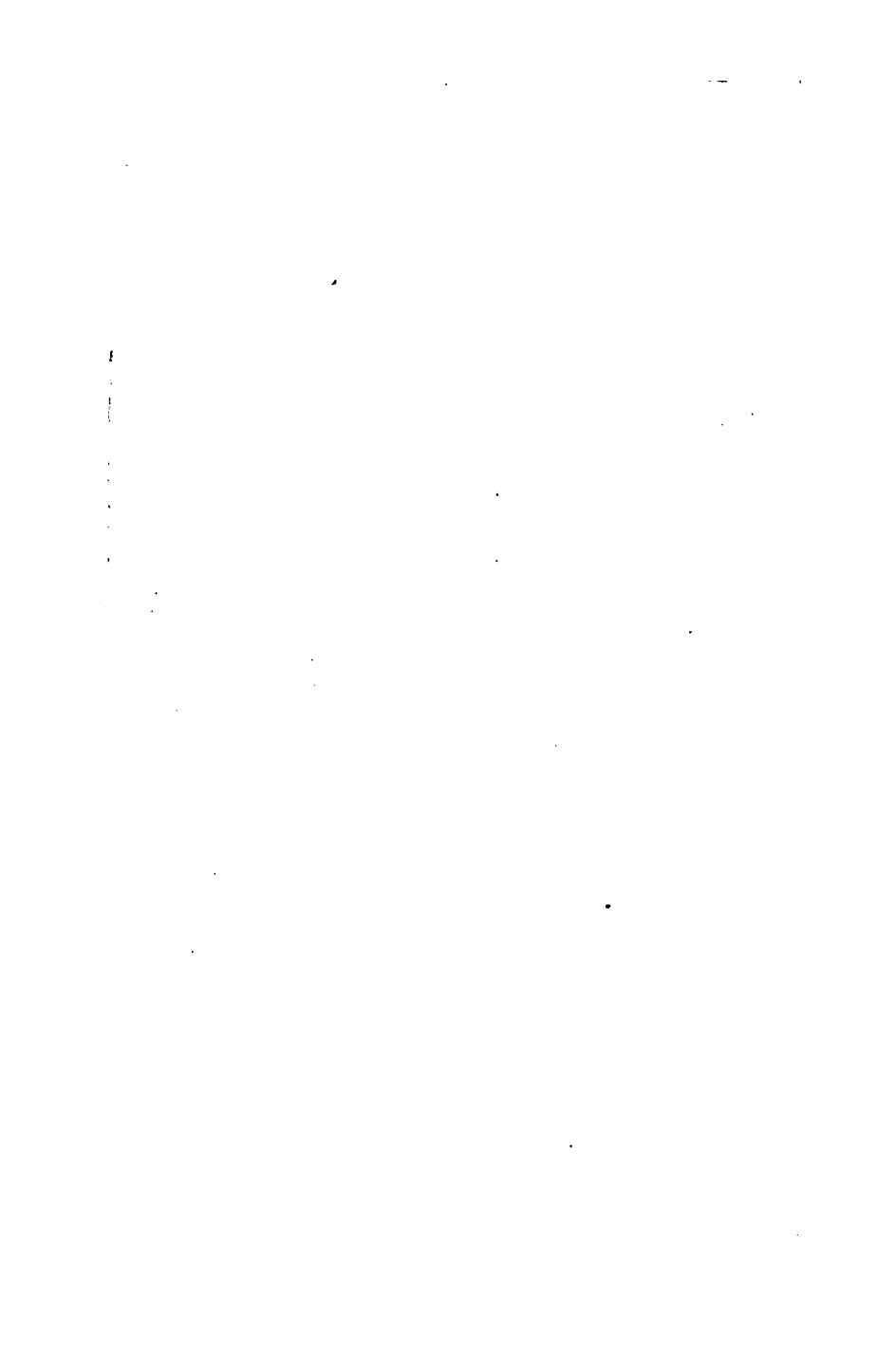


600017747W

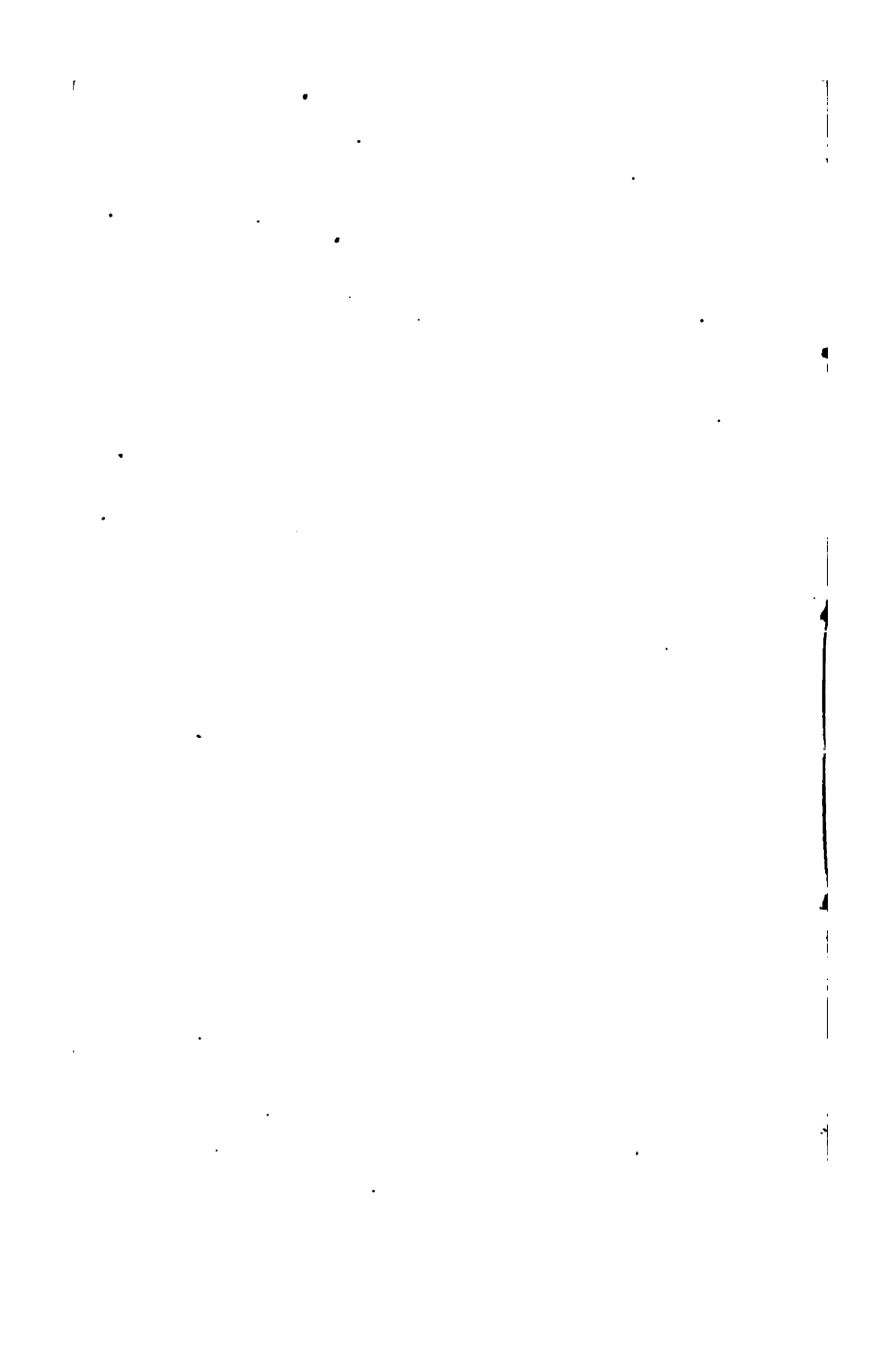




LIFE OF SOUTHEY.



LIFE OF SOUTHEY.



LIFE

OF

ROBERT SOUTHEY, LL.D.

POET-LAUREATE, &c.

BY

CHARLES T. BROWNE.

LONDON:

CHAPMAN AND HALL, 193 PICCADILLY.

1854.

210. L. 73.



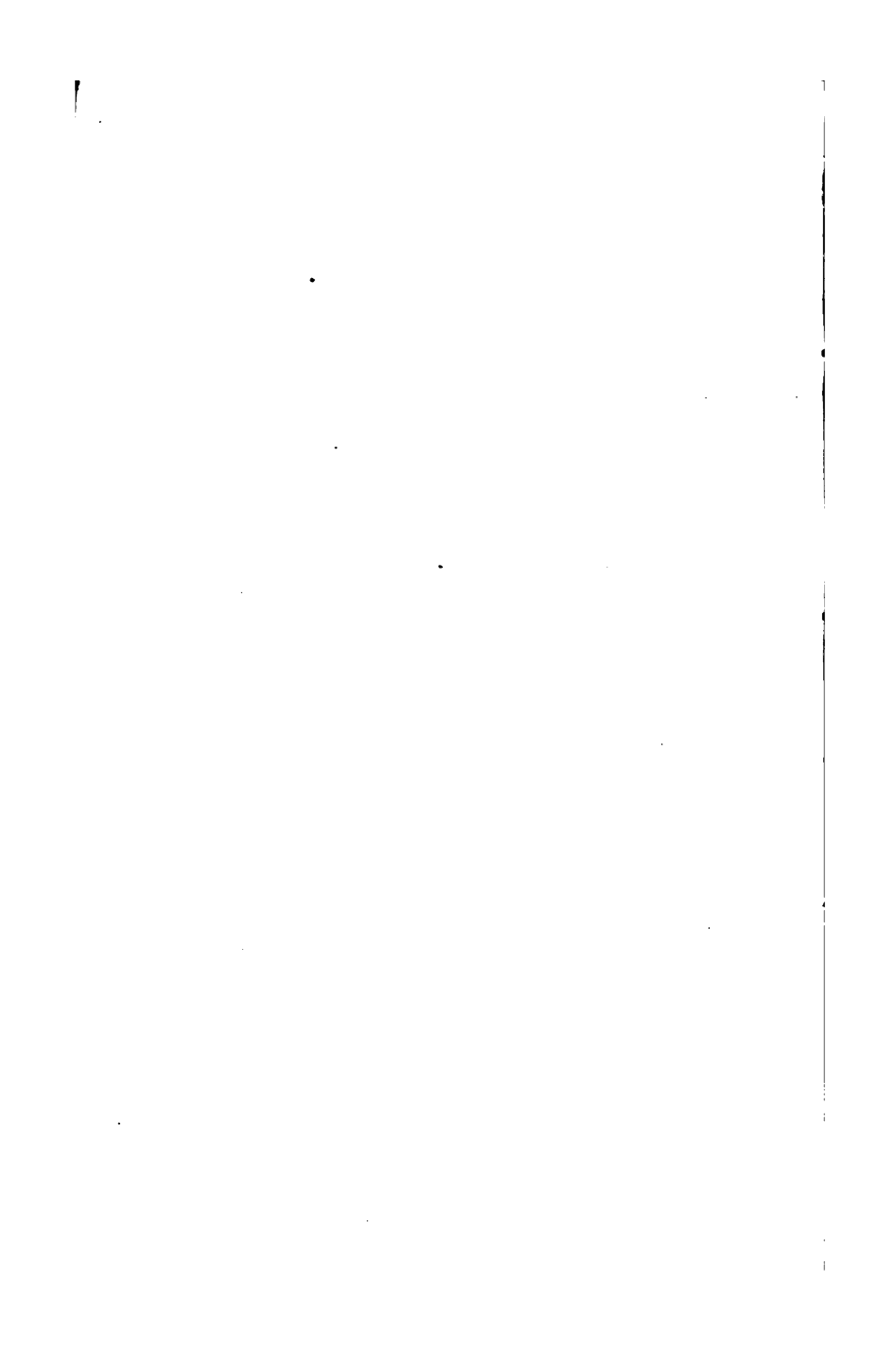
LONDON:
Printed by G. BARCLAY, Castle St. Leicester Sq.

PREFACE.

THE present Volume does not aspire to compete with the "Life and Correspondence of Southey," edited by his Son. It is necessarily less copious in detail, less full of familiar and affectionate illustrations of character; but I have aimed, without yielding to any political or literary bias, at giving a cheerful narrative of the actions, and an impartial estimate of the opinions and genius, of a man whose name is deservedly ranked amongst those of our first writers.

C. T. B.

Paris, Nov. 1853.



CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

Lineage and Birth of Southey—His Infancy—His First School
—Curious Incident—Miss Tyler—The Theatre—Misappli-
cation of Terms Page 1

CHAPTER II.

The Character of his Schools—Remarks on Education—His
Grandmother's House—Visit to Weymouth—Fondness for
Reading—Attempts at Composition—Habits and Dispo-
sition—Shadrach Weeks—Preparing for Westminster—His
Entrance—Public Schools—Anticipations—Life at West-
minster—Friends—Literary Efforts—The Flagellator—Dr.
Vincent—Expulsion—Life at Bristol 8

CHAPTER III.

His Father's Affairs—His Uncle Southey—His Uncle Hill—
Death of his Father—Matriculates at Oxford—His Feelings
and Opinions—Life at Oxford—Edmund Seward—Coleridge
—Trip into Herefordshire—Visit to Brixton—Joan of Arc—
Views in Life—Pantisocracy; its Plans, Projects, and Im-
practicability 25

CHAPTER IV.

Prospects in Life—Miss Tyler—Dependence upon Literature
—Lectures at Bristol—Publication of "Joan of Arc"—Return
• of Mr. Hill to England—Southey prepares for a Voyage to
Lisbon—His Marriage 43

CHAPTER V.

Delay at Falmouth—Character of Mr. Hill—Portuguese History—Coruña—Spanish Inns—Description of the Town—His Journey—Mules and Bells—Description of Scenery—Villages—The Country People—Madrid—The Palace—The Theatres—The Fiesta de Novillos—Grand Parade of the King—Entrance to Badajos—Adea Gallega—Lisbon—"Letters from Spain and Portugal"—Character of Southey P. 50

CHAPTER VI.

Death of Robert Lovell—His Widow—Opinions—Literary Labours—Study of the Law—Life in London—Burton—John Rickman—His brother Thomas—Convalescent Asylum—"Morning Post"—George Burnett—His brother Henry—Visit to Norwich—Mr. Taylor—Verses to his Wife 66

CHAPTER VII.

Westbury—Humphry Davy—"Madoc"—Poetry—Engagements—Health—Tour through North Wales—Its Scenery—Strewing Graves—Play-writing—Literary Reputation—Reviews—A Strange Lady—Visit to London—Books—Suwarrow—Sabbath Mails—Tour through North Devon—Valley of Rocks—Settles at Burton 77

CHAPTER VIII.

Indisposition of Southey—Return to Lisbon—Alarm at Sea—Coast of Portugal—Residence at Lisbon—Literary Labours—State of Lisbon—The Government—Condition of the People—Crime—Negroes—Charity—Catholicism—Cintra—Journey into the Interior—Preparations for quitting Portugal 89

CHAPTER IX.

Return to England—Mr. Drummond—Keswick—Coleridge and Wordsworth—Cumberland Scenery—Secretaryship to the Chancellor of the Exchequer for Ireland—Celebrated Characters—Death of his Mother—Chatterton's Sister—Sir Herbert Croft—Birth of a Daughter—House-hunting—Literature Page 100

CHAPTER X.

Fondness for the Past—The "Bibliotheca Britannica"—Death of his Daughter—Resides at Keswick—His Character—Literature—"Madoc"—Specimens of the Modern English Poets—Thoughts of visiting Portugal—Visit to Scotland—Edinburgh—Ashestiel—Walter Scott—Jeffrey and Brougham—Criticism and Reviews 110

CHAPTER XI.

Cumberland—The Lakers—Change of Ministry—Expectations—Death of his Uncle, John Southey—Pension—Literature—European Politics—History of Brazil—Kirke White—Literature—Letter to Grosvenor Bedford 121

CHAPTER XII.

Disagreement between the Editor and Proprietors of the "Edinburgh Review"—Overtures to Southey—Continental Politics—Sir Walter Scott withdraws from the "Edinburgh Review"—"The Quarterly Review"—Engagement of Southey on it—Gifford and his Contributors 138

CHAPTER XIII.

Marriage of his brother Henry—Goes to Durham—His Family
 —Canning—Stewardship of the Greenwich Hospital—"The
 Friend"—Ebenezer Elliott—Criticism—"Edinburgh Annual
 Register"—William Roberts—Opinions—Death of his Uncle
 Southey—Generosity—Advice to a young Friend entering
 College—Shelley—Assassination of the Hon. Mr. Perceval
 —Politics Page 146

CHAPTER XIV.

Engagements—His Family—Annual Register—Quarterly Re-
 view—Life of Nelson—Applications from Literary Aspirants
 —James Dusatoy—Vacant Office of the Laureateship filled by
 Southey—Lord Byron—The Carmen Triumphale—Politics
 —Laureate Odes—Don Roderick, the Last of the Goths—
 Southey's Poetry—Wordsworth's—Immortality . . . 169

CHAPTER XV.

Battle of Waterloo—Public Rejoicings—Visit to the Continent
 —Pilgrimage to Waterloo—Brussels—French History of
 Brazil—Detained at Aix-la-Chapelle—Companions—Ghent
 —Béguinages—Return—Death of his Son—Employments—
 Visits—Owen of Lanark 186

CHAPTER XVI.

Lord Liverpool—Southey requested to meet the Prime Minister
 —Means of suppressing Sedition—Observations on the
 Moral and Political State of England—Herbert Knowles—
 Academy of Madrid—Royal Institution of Amsterdam—Wat
 Tyler—The "Times" Newspaper—Tour on the Continent—
 Lakers 200

CHAPTER XVII.

Offer of Librarianship of the Advocates' Library, Edinburgh—
 His present Powers—His future Prospects—Birth of a Son
 —Method of Study—History of Brazil—Visit to Scotland—
 John Morgan—Bequest of a Lunatic—Biographical Hoax—
 Life of Wesley—Visit to Wales—Degree of LL.D.—Literary
 Labours—Shelley—Life of George Fox—Death of Nash the
 Artist—Roderic, dernier Roi des Goths—Death of Miss
 Tyler Page 213

CHAPTER XVIII.

Death of George III.—Vision of Judgment—The Critics—Ame-
 rica—Mr. Ticknor—American Literature—Book of the
 Church—Dr. Channing—Rev. G. Benson—Gifford—Do-
 mestic Expenses—Visit to London—Charles Lamb and the
 Quarterly Review—Criticism and Remarks on "Elia"—
 Rowland Hill—Present of a Bible—Journey to the West—
 Wesleyan Methodism and Church Government—Morning
 Chronicle, Southey, and Mr. H. Taylor—The Book of the
 Church and the Romanists—Testimonies in its favour—
 Vindiciæ Ecclesiæ Anglicanæ 225

CHAPTER XIX.

Journey to Holland and Belgium—Brussels—Antwerp—Is laid
 up at Leyden—Mr. Bilderjik—Lowland Hospitality—The
 Hague—Return to England—Literary Labours—A Second
 Visit to Holland—Death of his youngest Daughter—Is
 elected to sit in Parliament for the Borough of Downton—
 Garrick Papers—Foreign Quarterly—Visit to his Uncle—
 Engagements in London 239

CHAPTER XX.

Review of Southey's Labours—His Hopes and Aspirations— Rev. Mr. Shannon—Colloquies of Sir Thomas More, and the Rev. J. Hornby—The Church and Methodism—A Cha- ritable Institution—Literary Labours—Visit to London— Political Excitement—Visit to Hampshire—Creditor— Bristol	Page 251
--	----------

CHAPTER XXI.

Lord Brougham and the Endowment of Literature—Southey's Opinions on the Subject—Character of Education—Obser- vance of the Sabbath—Reform Bill and the Conservatives— Dr. Bell—Professorship of Humanity, Glasgow—Essays, Moral and Political—The Doctor—Its Publication—Mar- riage of his eldest Daughter—Illness of his Wife—State of Southey's Feelings	261
--	-----

CHAPTER XXII.

Offer of a Baronetcy—Pension from the Civil List—Health of Mrs. Southey—Southey subpoenaed to the Lancaster Assizes —Tour to the West of England—Life of Cowper—Naval Biography—Death of Mrs. Southey—Tour on the Continent —Calais—Caen—Bayeux—Nantes—Orleans—Paris— Return to England—Second Marriage of Southey	273
---	-----

CHAPTER XXIII.

The last Scene—Review of Southey's Character and Writings —Greta Hall	286
--	-----

CHAPTER I.

Lineage and Birth of Southey—His Infancy—His First School
—Curious Incident—Miss Tyler—The Theatre—Misapplication of Terms.

ANNO 1774–1780.

BENEATH the shadow of the Blackdown Hills, and in the beautiful and fertile valley of the Tone, in Somersetshire, lies the elegant little town of Wellington. Here, in the yellow pages of the Parish Register, towards the end of the seventeenth century, we find the first authentic notice of the Southeys. Tradition, it is true, faintly asserts that Robert Southey, who married a niece, or second cousin, of John Locke, was engaged in the Monmouth rebellion, and narrowly escaped the tender mercies of the Bloody Assize. There is always some heroic legend of this kind floating in the memories of families that have become illustrious. However, as we have said, the prosy register of Wellington introduces Mr. Robert Southey, and his wife Anne, engaged in the peaceful and pleasant duty of recording

that their son Thomas had been admitted into the Christian Church by the rite of baptism in the month of October, 1696.

Robert Southey was a second son ; but we have no interest in following the fortunes of the eldest branch. The Thomas we have mentioned was a tiller of the ground, and yet no boor. His great descendant records, with quiet pride, that he enjoyed the privilege of armorial bearings, and belonged, therefore, to a superior class of yeomen.

Thomas Southey's second son was named after his grandfather. Nature had formed him for a rural life, but circumstances placed him behind a grocer's counter in one of the densest quarters of the metropolis. There, instead of the first-fruits of the earth, he dealt in tea and currants, until the insolvency of his master sent him again adrift upon the world. He was soon, however, apprenticed to a Mr. Britton, a linendraper of Bristol, and ultimately set up a similar business on his own account in that city, where he married Miss Hill, daughter of an attorney of Bedminster. His first son died when an infant ; but the second, born on the 12th of August, 1774, was Robert Southey, destined to become celebrated as a poet and historian. We record the fact advisedly, and purposely indicate the humble fortunes of the great writer's ancestors : but we must not be confounded with those who find in such circumstances a weapon of detraction. Intellect lends glory

to ancestral honours ; it derives none from them. Who would find a topic of applause in the fact that Robert Southey *might* have come in for a share in a property of a hundred thousand pounds ?

The maternal grandmother of the poet married twice, and thus connected him with two honourable families. Her first husband, Mr. Tyler, claimed a remote lineage, and had a seat at Dilwyn, in Herefordshire. At his decease, the widow, who was left with three sons and a daughter, married Mr. Hill, himself a widower, and father of two children. To this branch of his family Southey seems to have been indebted for much of his intellectual vigour ; and we may add that his uncle, the Rev. Herbert Hill, watched with paternal solicitude over his future career.

The infancy of the future poet, for what reason does not appear, was intrusted to the care of a foster-mother, who had from childhood been employed as a servant in the family. By her he was treated with great kindness ; but it seems that, even as early as the second year of his age, he was painfully affected by the dismal nursery tales told him. Partly from this reason sensibility became a prominent feature in his character, and made him acutely alive not only to his own sorrows, but to the distress and privations of others.

At a very early age Southey was sent to a Dame School in the vicinity of his father's residence, to be initiated into the mysteries of the alphabet. His recol-

CHAPTER II.

The Character of his Schools—Remarks on Education—His Grandmother's House—Visit to Weymouth—Fondness for Reading—Attempts a Composition—Habits and Disposition—Shadrach Weeks—Preparing for Westminster—His Entrance—Public Schools—Anticipations—Life at Westminster—Friends—Literary Efforts—The Flagellator—Dr. Vincent—Expulsion—Life at Bristol.

ÆTAT. 6-18.

THE school to which Southey was next removed was conducted by a Baptist minister, by whom he was treated with unusual severity. He now experienced, for the first time, the tyranny of the world, and in the elder boys of the establishment learned to regard human nature with suspicion and dread. But he remained here only a twelvemonth, and was placed under the care of Mr. Flower, of Corston, near Bath. The progress he made with him was not commensurate with the abilities he possessed. The real object of schools, in those Bæotian days, seems to have been miserably neglected. Institutions of learning, in too many in-

stances, they were not. Even where the most zealous advocates of education were to be found, the method which was pursued was usually the least facile and direct. A knowledge of the classics was regarded as the most essential, and the plan by which it was acquired was rather a scheme for loading the memory and puzzling the mind than a system for simplifying the difficulties of the dead languages, and rendering their terms comprehensible to the understandings of youth. The true purpose and aim of education—the leading the mind to observe and discriminate—to depend upon its own powers, feeble at first, but gathering strength with every effort—to draw inferences and educe truth—was seldom contemplated; and the discipline then in practice tended rather to defeat the work of learning than to promote it. If there were some conscientious men who strove to impart to their pupils what they considered real knowledge, there were others who imagined they had done enough for duty when they had placed a book before their scholars, and left them to discover its signs and unravel its mysteries themselves. Of this class was Mr. Flower. His chief delight was in the study of mathematics and astronomy, to which he devoted his whole time, whilst the charge of the school was committed to his son, a youth of sixteen. It is, therefore, no surprise that the progress of Southey was slow; and what was, perhaps, still worse, the knowledge he acquired imperfect. A well-grounded acquaint-

ance with the principles of language was that which was most essential to him ; and to this no attention was paid. The injurious effects of this neglect he afterwards fully experienced when a student at Westminster.

Nor were the physical habits of the pupils more respected than their mental training. Their morning ablutions were performed in a brook not more than ankle deep, that ran through the court-yard in which they played. Their breakfast consisted of porridge in winter, of bread and milk in summer. One day in the week bread and cheese served them for dinner, and when bedtime arrived they had the same for supper. Southey's experience of this management was of no long continuance, the school having been broken up, by the conduct of the father and son, shortly after he was placed there.

Mr. Williams, a person who resided on St. Michael's Hill, Bristol, was the next person who had the care of Southey's education. The lad made greater proficiency here than at his previous schools ; but the limited acquirements of his master and the unambitious character of the seminary checked his ulterior studies, and he only acquired as much as he could teach himself with a little guidance. He learned the mechanical art of calligraphy in this establishment, for which both himself and the printers were afterwards sensibly grateful.

During his residence at Corston young Southey lost an infant sister and his grandmother, Mrs. Hill. Upon

the decease of the latter, Miss Tyler thought it expedient to break up her establishment at Bath and occupy the house rendered vacant by the death of her mother. This house had frequently been the home of Southey whilst he was at school in Bristol, and here he had passed many of the most agreeable hours of his childhood. With his aunt he was under too much restraint ; his father's residence was in one of the noisiest parts of the city : but here he enjoyed a liberty that sweetened every enjoyment, and learnt to take delight in rural sights and sounds,—a taste which grew up with him and remained unabated through life. He had not that alertness or propensity to youthful sports that usually distinguishes boyhood ; but he gave indications of a reflective and experimental mind. He pursued with ardour the study of botany and entomology, and watched with peculiar inquisitiveness the changes and habits of flowers and insects.

The house itself was one calculated to feed a pensive mind. It was old. It stood by itself, enclosed in a garden or orchard, down a green lane, removed yet not remote from the Great Western high-road. The antique porch was lined with white jessamine ; and on its semi-circular steps he spent many hours with his sister, threading the fallen blossoms upon grass stalks. Its quaint appearance and quaint furniture were remembered long, and the reference to them in " Dr. Daniel Dove's Patrimonial Cottage," exhibits the strong link that still bound him to the house.

During the first two years after his removal from Corston, Southey lived with his father in Wine Street, at a convenient distance from Mr. Williams's academy. His holidays, however, were usually passed at Miss Tyler's, who took him upon occasional excursions. Their first trip was to Weymouth, and its object a visit to Madame Dolignon. For the first time the future poet now saw the sea, and the impression it made upon him was commensurate with its magnitude. His mind was as yet too young to have framed any previous idea of the ocean; and when it burst upon him in the fulness of its glory, there were no false conceptions to remove, no exaggerated anticipations to disappoint. The pleasure of this visit was further enhanced by short journeys into the country.

Southey was now twelve years of age, of a quick and apprehensive mind, and an enthusiastic temperament. Although he did not possess the advantage of a regular course of study, he was a close reader, and was laying in an extensive stock of desultory knowledge. The frequency of his visits to the theatre had given him a taste for Shakspeare, and he was stimulated to read and re-read the productions of that great poet. "Titus Andronicus" was his favourite play, probably on account of the tales of deep horror it contains, more suited to his comprehension than appeals to the feelings. "Cymbeline" and "As You Like It" pleased him best on the stage, being the most romantic. He was also familiar

with the writings of Beaumont and Fletcher. The effect of this constant excitement and study soon manifested itself in his desire to become a play-writer. When he was only eight years of age he had fixed upon his subject, contrived the plot, and composed an act and a half. His ardour was not confined to himself. He endeavoured to inspire his school-fellows with the same enthusiasm, and to prevail upon them to join in the composition of a tragedy. In vain : they all, from the oldest to the youngest, protested their incompetency. He gave them the *dramatis personæ*, but their incapacity continued. He remonstrated, but was at length compelled to desist, with surprise and vexation, from the arduous task of communicating his own energy and genius to others.

His time, however, was not spent solely in play-reading and composition. "Gerusalemme Liberata," for which he had imbibed a passionate fondness from the "Stories of Orlando and Sophronia," was another favourite ; and when this was devoured, "Orlando Furioso" and Spenser's "Faëry Queen" caught his affections. The miscellaneous volumes upon his father's shelves were too few and too common-place to afford food for his expanding mind. Yet there were amongst them those from which he learned something of political wit, scandal, and warfare. But from the circulating library he obtained books of greater value. Mickle's "Lusiad," Pope's "Homer," Sidney's "Arcadia," and

Rowley's "Poems," are amongst those which he enumerates as having greatly delighted him. He also acquired an extensive acquaintance with the novels of the day, the Arabian and mock-Arabian tales, the whole works of Josephus, a general idea of Greek and Roman history, and some conception of ancient mythology.

The faculty of composition was scarcely ever dormant. After failing to engraft a story upon the "Orlando Furioso," of which "Arcadia" was to have been the scene and title, and the expulsion of the Moors out of France under Marsilius the subject, he made some progress in an epic poem upon "Egbert, king of Saxon Heptarchy."* In imitation of Ovid, he had written heroic epistles in rhyme; besides several other productions, satirical and dramatic, which it would be superfluous to enumerate, but which exhibit an extraordinary activity of thought and power of invention, as well as an unusual facility of expression.

The excessive attachment to reading which Southey exhibited, and the unrestricted liberty with which he was permitted to indulge it—he was quiet whilst he read—made him contract a spirit of reserve and isolation from even his equals in age, which sensibly affected his manner. Amongst those with whom he had for so long a time associated at school, there were none whom he

* This epic having been seen by a lady, who could not restrain her curiosity, the indignant author composed a system of ciphers for himself.

selected as friends and companions ; nor does he appear to have engaged in boyish sports and exercises with the alacrity and vigour consistent with his years. For this he was, doubtless, indebted to the injudicious treatment of his aunt ; and it might have been carried to an extent permanently injurious, had not his attachment for Shadrach Weeks, who acted in the capacity of servant-boy, in some measure interrupted his close application. Having this youth as a companion, the bad effects of his home education were partially counteracted. They worked together in the garden, played in the fields, made kites and flew them, tried their hands at carpentering, strolled into the country, gathered the primrose, the cowslip, the violet, and a thousand other wild flowers that garland the brow and perfume the breath of Spring,—penetrated as far as Clifton and the St. Vincent's Rocks, climbed their steep and romantic pathways, inhaled the fresh air of the Downs, and acquired some of that masculine vigour and strength natural to boyhood.

Southey had exhibited unquestionable proofs of an intelligent and active mind. His friends were, therefore, anxious to give full scope to his abilities, and Westminster School was fixed upon as being the fittest arena for displaying and maturing his awakening talents. Apprehending, however, that he was not sufficiently advanced for his admission, or wishing to give him an additional advantage previous to his entrance, it was arranged that he

should receive lessons from a gentleman who devoted a few hours each day to the education of private pupils only. By him Southey was introduced to the Greek language, and made to try his hand at nonsense verses. He read the "Eclecta ex Ovidio et Tibullo," Horace's "Odes," and wrote English themes. On being first required to perform this last task, his powers utterly failed him. He had been accustomed to pour out his thoughts in almost unpremeditated verse; but when asked for an essay in prose, his mind appeared a chaos, and the fountain of his ideas dried up. Every effort was in vain; and his aunt was at last obliged to write the lesson for him. His future attempts, by the kind guidance and instruction of his tutor, were more propitious. It was not, however, till some time after that he overcame his disinclination to prose so far as to make its composition a labour of love. His great ambition was to be a poet.

Using his experience at Westminster as a guide, Southey divided youth into three classes,—those whose physiognomy indicated the possession of moral and intellectual qualities, of whom the number was small; those decidedly mischievous and vicious, who, though not numerous, preponderated over the first; and those who possessed *no* decision of character, but might be easily moulded by either of the two former classes. Of this last the multitude consisted. As vice is ever more active than virtue, and the propensities of our nature

incline to evil, he believed that the influence of the second class prevailed to a greater extent where numbers were congregated, and that the tyranny they exercised was fearfully detrimental to the morality of the third.

With a proper supervision of the conduct of the pupils, however, there can be little doubt but that education at a public school is, to a certain extent, advantageous. The inexcusable cruelties and tyranny of *fagging*, which make not up a part of the system, being abolished, there remains an ample field for the exercise and expansion of the mind. Industry is stimulated by a generous competition; the ambition it excites can only be baneful when carried to an undue and ill-regulated extent, and even these instances must be confined to few. Generally a youth is there taught, in a position where all are temporarily his equals, not to think of himself more highly than he ought, whatever may be his rank. He learns early, but with a milder violence, the struggles and disappointments that await him in the more capacious field of life, and practises the arduous lesson, unconsciously perhaps, but not the less effectually, of self-government. Nor must we forget that these minor colleges, for the most part, are conducted by men of eminent abilities and sound learning.

The usual formalities having been gone through, Southey became a scholar of the Westminster School about the beginning of March 1788. It is a subject of

regret that so little is known of his life during his residence there. The information which he has left us, even in those letters which were designed to give an ample portraiture of his life, and to which we are indebted for the interesting account of his early years, refers at this time not so much to himself as to others, in whom the public can feel little sympathy. His hopes, his ambition, his feelings, his pursuits, his plans, and the general progress of his studies, are untouched. He thought it a more pleasing labour, though not unalloyed with transitory emotions of pain, to retrace the footsteps of time, to recall the scenes where so many of his comrades had acted a part, and himself amongst the many, and to remember, with a vigour forty years had not impaired, the characters and careers of those with whose life he was then so intimately mixed up.

On his anticipations previous to entering the school he has left some remarks. Reading in the papers of the day an account of the examinations and recitations, his imagination was fired with the idea that he was to be introduced to characters whose talents and virtues, he presumed, had brought them thus prominently forward. He thought himself already united, by the fellowship of genius, in bonds of a sacred friendship with living poets. Such day-dreams were, however, to vanish. Upon his entrance he was placed in the fourth class, a position inferior to that which he would have occupied had a greater attention been paid to his classics earlier ;

and he found that the formalities of the school had fixed a wide gulf between the Upper and Lower Forms. With those only who belonged to his class or form, or those who boarded in the same house with himself, did he become intimate; and even this circle was circumscribed by the natural tendency we have to select our companions from amongst those whose feelings and tastes coincide with our own.

It was Southey's good fortune, however, on entering, to be placed under the protection of a boy of a mild and inoffensive disposition. The cruelty and brutality with which the fagging system is sometimes exercised, have always been regarded as the greatest abuses of these establishments. Cowper had before experienced the rigour of such tyranny, and witnessed against the inhumanity of its rule. His gentle nature could not bear up against the intolerant practice, and with a bitterness of feeling time and retrospection could not soften—perhaps which his large sympathies tended to revive—he inveighed against, and would have uprooted, the whole system.

The materials upon which we can form an opinion of Southey's Westminster career are, as we have already stated, scanty. Following the ordinary course prescribed, he does not appear to have exhibited any remarkable proficiency in his academical studies. It is probable, that a mind constituted as his was, and which had become habituated to desultory reading, cared little

to dive into the critical analysis of languages; and it is certain he felt severely the want of a sound education at the beginning. Much of his leisure time—or, as he himself calls it, his truant-hours, possibly because he ought to have been engaged in the prescribed labours of the school—was employed in the library in Dean's Yard, where he pored over strange and antiquated books. It was here, he tells us,* that, reading over Picart's "Religious Ceremonies," he formed the idea of illustrating the mythology of different nations in a series of grand epics.

Southey seems to have escaped the corruption which he apprehended was so rank at public schools, and tends to weaken the moral sensibility of youth. His affections, which were ever warm and ardent, became confirmed by the growth of time; and he now formed friendships which lasted through life, and softened many of its bitterest hours. Of those who had been his companions at Westminster, few, however, lived to enjoy life long. Some entered the army or the navy, to swell the ranks which were daily thinned by the disastrous wars of the ensuing thirty years, or the ravages of fever, which insidiously attacked them in tropical climates. Others engaged in civil offices in their own country or the colonies, and found not a securer refuge from the inevitable shaft; whilst two or three, as it has been

* See "*Vindiciæ Eccl. Angl.*" p. 7.

before observed, survived to a good old age, succouring and cheering each other.

We come now to the closing scene of Southey's life at Westminster. The scholars of Eton had issued a publication entitled the "Microcosm." The papers which were contributed to it evinced considerable talent; and the circulation of the periodical was not, we believe, confined to the precincts of the college. This excited a strong feeling of emulation on the part of the Westminster scholars, and a rival was originated, entitled "The Trifler." This magazine had been established when Southey entered the school, and he, amongst many others, aspired to the honours of authorship. An elegy upon the death of his sister found its way into the editor's box, signed by the initial "B;" but the only notice taken of it was in the column to correspondents, in which it was announced that contributors must suffer their productions to receive the pruning-knife of the editor to any extent he might deem requisite. However, after a run of forty numbers, "The Trifler" became extinct.

When Southey, however, mounted to the Upper Form, he, in conjunction with Wynn, afterwards Under-Secretary-of-War in the Grenville administration; Grosvenor Bedford, one of his most intimate friends and correspondents through life; and Strachey, afterwards Chief Secretary at Madras, endeavoured to rouse the literary spirit of the Westminster scholars, and

started a new publication, to which he gave the title of "The Flagellant." The name sufficiently indicates the critical temper of the magazine. In the fifth number of this periodical an article appeared upon the subject of corporal punishment: the argument of the paper went to show (it was written ironically) that flagellation formed a portion of the religious ceremonies of the heathen; that such ceremonies had been declared institutions of the devil in the writings of the ancient Fathers; and that, logically, no part nor portion of such ceremonies (of which flagellation was one) ought to be permitted in a Christian country. The article was expressed in general terms, but its writer had perhaps an eye upon the inhuman floggings in the army. The remarks, however, were interpreted as high treason against the authorities of the school, and a prosecution against the publisher commenced.

The Head Master at this time was Dr. Vincent, and the mantle of the celebrated Dr. Busby seems to have fallen upon his successor. He had great notions of the majesty of his office, and spared not the rod. No distinction was made between faults of a venial and those of a grave nature: the whole was a matter of habit. The temper of the flagellator, his partialities and antipathies, had more to do with its application than justice herself. Seeing the offence which the article gave, and desiring to shield the unfortunate publisher, Southey came forward, stated that he was the author of the

remarks, and apologized for them. The irate Doctor, however, was immutable, and the private expulsion of Southey alone could satisfy his outraged dignity. That this was a hasty and unnecessary step, no one will doubt. Southey withdrew from the school, with a consciousness that the punishment exceeded the offence, but not without a corresponding feeling of indignation and regret.

He now retired to the house of his aunt, Miss Tyler, who had removed from Bedminster to College Green, Bristol. He was in his eighteenth year, with a mind well stored, an independent judgment, a keen sensibility, and ardent aspirations, but without any particular object upon which to direct his energies. The sudden extinction, by the "Flagellant" affair, of whatever schemes he might have planned, had not yet been followed by any new idea, so that the succeeding interval was a period of wearying depression, in which he found how much more toilsome a state of vacant and aimless existence is than the most busy moments of a well-purposed life.

His time, it is true, was engaged in reading, and the visitations of the Muses served for a while to draw away his thoughts from sublunary subjects; but he felt that every moment not spent in forwarding one object of life was a moment wasted. The opinions which he had formed from ancient authors (Epictetus was his favourite) upon the nature and character of philosophy, operated beneficially upon his mind, and regulated his conduct. "To search for applause from within, to attend only to the

inward monitor, to be superior to fortune," appeared to him to be its proper uses, and to apply them to his own circumstances he regarded as the greatest and truest wisdom. About the same period he writes : " I have a strong predilection to live, not from Shakspeare's painfully beautiful passage,

'To die, and go we know not whither,' &c.,

but from the hope that my life may be serviceable to my family and happy to myself."

CHAPTER III.

His Father's Affairs—His Uncle Southey—His Uncle Hill—
Death of his Father—Matriculates at Oxford—His Feelings
and Opinions—Life at Oxford—Edmund Seward—Coleridge
—Trip into Herefordshire—Visit to Brixton—Joan of Arc—
Views in Life—Pantisocracy; its Plans, Projects, and Im-
practicability.

ANNO 1792-1794.

SOUTHEY was recalled from his dreamy existence by a circumstance that must have been peculiarly distressing to his independent spirit. His father, owing to ill success in trade, had become involved in difficulties, and it was requisite to raise a sum of money to enable him to continue in the business. It was therefore determined, as a last resource, to lay the matter before a childless uncle, the inheritor of the Cannon estates, who was worth a hundred thousand pounds, and solicit his temporary assistance. Upon this, at all times unpleasant mission, Southey was despatched. On arriving at Taunton, however, he found that no sympathy with his father's distress existed in that quarter. His uncle was

of a perverse disposition, and loved the accumulation of gold more than he regarded the ties and claims of kindred. A refusal ensued, and Southey returned to Bristol, still more disappointed and vexed with the world. During his absence, however, an aunt had advanced the sum required, and prevented the immediate ill consequences of his uncle's refusal.

This little digression, however, was of great value to Southey, as the misfortune of his father had served to turn the current of his thoughts from himself to others, and forced upon his attention the necessity of vigorous exertion. Whilst he was reflecting upon the most beneficial course to pursue, and was weighing in his mind the advantages and disadvantages, the facilities and difficulties of each course, an offer too tempting and flattering to be resisted was proposed for his acceptance. His education at Westminster had been defrayed by his uncle, the Rev. Herbert Hill, at that time Chaplain to the English Factory at Lisbon, who had upon several occasions shown a great interest in him. Viewing his expulsion by Dr. Vincent in the light of an arbitrary exercise of authority rather than a just and temperate degree of punishment, Mr. Hill could not but express his regret and sympathy at the turn events had taken, and willing to express his full confidence in his nephew, and to encourage his extraordinary talents, proposed to him to pursue his studies at Oxford, and generously offered to defray the expenses.

The proposal was cordially accepted, and Southey proceeded immediately to the University for the purpose of matriculating, but was speedily recalled by the melancholy tidings of the death of his father, whose health had given way under the shock of his late misfortunes. When the ceremony of interment was over, and a decent period had elapsed for mourning and consolation, Southey returned to Oxford, and would have entered at Christ Church, but found the gates of admission closed against him. The affair of "The Flagellant" had made him notorious; an intimate connexion existed between the Westminster School and this college; and Cyril Jackson, the dean, regarding the matter as a mark of disgrace upon the character of Southey, refused him admission. However, he entered at Balliol instead, whither he went to reside early in 1793.

The constitution of his mind at this time was peculiar—peculiar, because it was marked with the features of uncompromising independence. It is for the thousands and tens of thousands, who learn as they are taught and think as they are instructed, to pursue the beaten track and imagine they are right when they follow the multitude. Such a course could not satisfy Southey. He was particularly characterized by an inquiring and original spirit, and both in his political and religious creeds differed widely from the orthodoxy of the times. The philosophy of the ancients, and the divine precepts of the Gospel, seem to have formed his moral

code; and further, it is probable, he did not speculate. Although deeply read in Gibbon and Voltaire, his temporary Socinianism, we presume, was more the result of his subsequent intimacy with Coleridge, than the consequence of his own deductions.

The political events which had taken place in America, as well as those which were going on on the Continent, had given rise to a school of politicians somewhat Utopian in character. The corruption and violence of existing governments disposed them to reject government altogether. They believed that the power of one man over another could never be exerted without crime; and that the business of a country could be transacted by the mutual consent of the citizens, without admitting the old idea of authority. Southey, with the generous enthusiasm of youth, naturally leaned towards these captivating doctrines; and he was prepared to receive with distaste, if not with disrespect, every ancient aspect of society.

If such were the feelings of Southey upon government, we shall not expect to find his estimate of mankind, or at least that portion of it which is peculiarly obnoxious to observation, much more favourable. "I expect to meet," he writes, previous to taking up his residence at Balliol College, "with pedantry, prejudice, and aristocracy;" from which he prays to be delivered. "Behold me, my friend, enlisted under the banners of Science and Stupidity—whichever you please—and, like

a recruit got sober, looking to days that are past, and feeling something like regret." . . . "I must learn," he continues, in language descriptive of himself, "to break a rebellious spirit, which neither authority nor oppression could ever bow; it would be easier to break my neck. I must learn to work a problem instead of writing an ode. I must learn to pay respect to men only remarkable for great wigs and little wisdom."

His first struggle, however, was not with the authorities of his college, but a person of some importance in his vocation, and who doubtless estimated the dignity of his profession no less highly than the notable Joseph Caxton of Fairport. This was the barber of the University. It was the custom of that period for all the students, without distinction, to have their hair dressed and powdered. Southey, however, peremptorily refused to have this violence offered to the natural graces of his head—he had long, flowing, curly hair. The astonishment of the academic functionary was of a most distressing nature. This was an innovation, no less important to him in his individual capacity than the revolution of empires to kings. He pleaded immemorial usage, refinement of taste, the impracticability of studying unpowdered. Southey was inexorable; and it may be added, that several who despised the practice, but had not the moral courage to commence this reform, followed the example thus set them, and refused to persist in a custom obviously uncleanly and absurd. Many of the

usages of the Universities were at this time not only notoriously arbitrary, but extremely ridiculous, and met with the most hearty and undisguised contempt of the young freshman. "Would you think it possible," he impatiently writes to a friend, "that the wise founders of an English University should forbid us to wear boots? What matters it whether I study in shoes or boots? To me it is a matter of indifference; but folly so ridiculous puts me out of conceit with the whole."

The course of study he now pursued is not revealed to us in any of his memoirs; but it is certain that he read extensively and thought deeply. At first he felt the irksomeness of subjects unpalatable to his undisciplined habits; and the sigh with which he says, "I must work a problem instead of writing an ode," indicates not only what a fascination the composition of poetry had for him, but also a spirit that shrunk from any study the mind was not partial to. With whatever reluctance he may have set himself to the preparation of such unimaginative labour, before long he had engaged in the *business* of learning, and an alarum-clock and tinder-box were articles added to the list of his collegiate furniture. He rose at five, and over the pages of the philosophic Tacitus—he speaks for himself—the hours of study passed as rapidly away as even those which were devoted to his friends.

During his whole life Southey was an enemy to intemperance; nor even at this early age, and in a place

where license is too frequently given and palliated under the plea of youthful inexperience, does it ever appear that he was guilty of excess in any of his habits. He freely censures the conduct of his fellow-students, and even hints at room for reformation in the conduct of their academic tutors. "The waters of Helicon are too much polluted by the wine of Bacchus." And any one acquainted with the discipline of the Universities in those days will regret to recognise the truthfulness of the picture, and rejoice that not only in our colleges, but in society in general, a great reformation of manners has taken place. Naturally disinclined to dissipation, it was to be expected that he should seek his companions amongst those who were of the same temperate habits as himself. Wynn, his fellow-student at Westminster, was now a scholar at Oxford, and the frequency of their meetings cemented that friendship which, but for this opportune reunion, might perhaps, like so many early connexions, have been forgotten. Edmund Seward, for whom he entertained a deep affection, was another friend of "sterling virtue" and "iron rectitude," and had he lived might have prevailed upon Southey to adopt moderate and sensible views.

He formed, however, another friendship during his stay at Oxford, which perhaps operated more powerfully than any other upon him, and gave a colour to his future life. Samuel Taylor Coleridge was at this time upon a visit to a friend in the University, and during his sojourn

was introduced to Southey by a fellow-collegian. Having been educated at Christ Hospital, London, this eccentric genius enlisted, under some unaccountable hallucination, into an equestrian corps as a private, from which he was rescued by his friends, and sent to Jesus College, Cambridge. Here he gave evidence of a strong and original mind, and was already regarded as a man of extraordinary abilities. The growth of his intimacy with Southey was rapid. In poetry and philosophy, in religion and politics, a strong coincidence of feeling and taste was almost intuitively detected; and this coincidence was enforced by the powerful rhetoric of the Cambridge student, and eagerly acknowledged by his no less fervent though less eloquent companion. This sympathy created a lively admiration on both sides, which soon ripened into a firm and lasting friendship.

The time which Southey could abstract from his studies was devoted to short excursions around Oxford. In these rambles—he was passionately fond of rural scenes—he experienced the greatest pleasure. The spots around this ancient University are exquisitely beautiful in themselves,—what spot chosen by the monks and abbots of old for the residence of their order is not?—full of venerable associations, and gratefully refreshing to the spirit of the thought-worn student. The town itself was not without its peculiar attractions for one who longed to live amongst the departed. The Venerable Bede, whose chair still remains to link a

thousand years with the present ; the immortal Alfred, the father of learning in a benighted age ; the renowned Bacon, the earliest of modern philosophers ; together with the illustrious champions of Protestantism, the martyrs Ridley and Latimer,—are names too closely connected with the University not to awaken feelings of reverence, even in a heart less susceptible than Southey's of venerating what time and genius had rendered sacred.

"My philosophy," he writes facetiously to his friend Grosvenor Bedford, "which has been of a kind so peculiar to myself—neither of the school of Plato, Aristotle, Westminster, or the Miller—is at length settled : I am become a peripatetic philosopher." This was to announce a pedestrian tour which he had made with his friend Edmund Seward into Herefordshire. With diary, writing-books, pen and ink, a silk handkerchief, and Milton's "Defence," he sallied forth. Passing through Woodstock, he and his companion came to the beautiful ruins of Evesham Abbey, where Edward defeated Simon de Montford. Having admired its broken tower, its high-pointed windows, and sighed over the mantling ivy that feedeth upon decay, and the tall grass that waved to and fro in the once crowded courts of the building ; "having conjured up in imagination the savage sons of superstition, and heard in fancy the deep tones of the solemn mass or chaunted prayer," they proceeded through Worcester

and Kidderminster, over the Malvern hills, to Ledbury. Near Bewdley, a place they passed through on their return, they saw an old mansion, formerly the seat of Lord Herbert, now mouldering away in so romantic a situation, that Southey could not resist flying back to the days of yore, and picturing to his eye the tapestried room, the listed fight, the vassal hall, the hospitable fire, the old baron and his young daughter, and forming of them the most exquisite day-dreams. The reminiscences of such an expedition were delightful in the extreme, and the labour (if any) of the walk was lost in the generous character of the exercise, or in the pleasing subjects of interest and reflection it afforded. "Who, in the name of common-sense," he continues in the same letter, "would travel stewed up in a leathern box, when they have legs, and those none of the shortest, fit for use? What scene can be more calculated to expand the soul than the sight of Nature in her loveliest works?"

In the month of August of this year (1793) Southey paid a visit to his friend Grosvenor Bedford, who resided at Brixton. Here he applied himself—so congenial to the spirit of his muse was the tranquillity which this retirement afforded him—to his first accomplished epic, "Joan of Arc," a poem which had been suggested to him by the same friend, probably when at Westminster. He had already made some progress in it, and a leisure of six weeks spent enthusiastically upon his

subject, brought the work to a completion. It appears, however, from a letter written some time after, that Southey had no other view in thus devoting himself to his epic than the gratification he derived from the employment of his time in the composition of poetry.

To pour forth his ideas, and give, as it were, "a local habitation and a name" to the thoughts that burned within him, had always been the source of his purest pleasures. The time and labour which he had hitherto expended upon versification, and the vast number of lines he had thrown off, would appear incredible, did we not know the astonishing powers of application which he exhibited in after-life, and which thus early seems to have become a habit with him, converting the dull routine of duty into a labour of love. On looking over his papers at this time for the purpose of arranging or destroying them, he estimated the number of lines he had written at thirty-five thousand, of which ten thousand he transcribed, as worthy of preservation; the same number had been burnt or lost, and the remaining fifteen thousand he condemned, as altogether worthless.

After remaining three months at Brixton, Southey returned to college, where he plunged deeply into the metaphysics of the ancient philosophers, especially "the Republic" of Plato, with whose sentiments he was strongly imbued; but, before the year had expired, returned to his aunt, Miss Tyler, at Bristol.

Enjoying as he was the society of friends whom he prized for the congeniality of their tastes and pursuits, and indulging himself occasionally in the academic sports of the seasons, he felt that he was labouring without a purpose,—that he was laying in a stock of learning for which he had defined to himself no specific use. The future of his existence was clouded, and though the present threw the sunshine of its real advantages over him, he could not but look with hesitation upon his after career. The tacit wish of his friends had designed him for the Church; he knew, too, that his uncle, to whose kindness he was so deeply indebted, entertained the same desire, though he had never expressed so much. His political and religious opinions were, however, an obstacle that could not be overcome, and he perceived that he must either sacrifice principle and honesty, by repudiating his creed, or appear in the eyes of some ungrateful for not complying with the understood object of so generous a relative. But there was no alternative. His duty was clearly marked out before him, and he unhesitatingly gave up all idea of taking holy orders. Physic for awhile seemed to hold out a better hope. To alleviate the misery of our fellow-creatures, and to relieve their bodily sufferings, has in all ages been regarded as one of the most honourable aspirations and privileges of the medical profession, and been pointed out to the young student, to stimulate him to undertake and to overcome the difficulties of such a

study. Southey entered upon the first course; but here again he was foiled at the very threshold of the attempt. His disgust of anatomy became a rooted antipathy, which he could not subdue. An equal aversion repelled him from the law; his opinions debarred him from any government situation; and as his education and habits had unfitted him for engaging in the business of trade, he was left in a dilemma most wearying and perplexing.

Whilst agitated by this uncertainty, a scheme was proposed to him by Coleridge well suited to his unsettled spirit, and full of that extravagance and romance which consorted with his visionary and distempered ideas. The plan was one for transporting a colony to the farther shores of the Atlantic Ocean, where they might live in uninterrupted harmony, dependent only upon their unthwarted exertions, and enjoying the produce of their labour in common. Pantisocracy gave at once a title and explanation to this wild design. Upon the banks of the Susquehanna, celebrated by the story of the once fair Wyoming, or in one of the luxuriant wildernesses of the Western republic, they were to fix their abode. The unquiet spirit of Cowley had once sighed for such a solitude.* Whilst the men were engaged in the labours of husbandry or hunted in the forests, the women were to occupy themselves in the duties peculiar to their sex.

* See Dr. Johnson's "Life of Cowley;" and the "Rambler," No. VI.

The prospect that no tax-gatherer, no rate-levyer, no tithe-collector, no aristocrat, would break in upon the beautiful tranquillity of this Elysium, gave an increased charm to the whole plan. Intellectual amusement was to be reserved for the quiet and stillness of the evening, when reading, composition, or conversation upon literary subjects, was to have an allotted portion, and be contributed to by each according to his tastes or dispositions.

For several months Southey and Coleridge applied themselves earnestly to the execution of their scheme. They were diligent in making converts, and after exhibiting extraordinary zeal, persuaded Robert Lovell (the poet), George Bennett, Robert Allen (then of Corpus Christi), Edmund Seward, Favell,* and La Grice, to join in this enterprise. Others subsequently consented, and

* The following sonnet, written by Favell, embodies the hopes and sentiments of the Pantisocrats : —

“ No more my visionary soul shall dwell
On joys that were ; no more endure to weigh
The shame and anguish of the evil day,
Wisely forgetful ! O'er the ocean's swell,
Sublime of Hope, I seek the cottage dell,
Where Virtue calm with careless steps may stray,
And, dancing to the moonlight roundelay,
The wizard Passion wears a holy spell.
Eyes that have ached with anguish, ye shall weep
Tears of doubt-mingled joy, as those who start
From precipices of distempered sleep,
On which the fierce-eyed fiends their revel keep,
And see the rising sun, and feel it dart
New rays of pleasure trembling on the heart.”

amongst these was Shadrach Weeks, who, probably, had little choice in the affair. Southey's mother, with Mrs. Lovell and her sisters, the two Miss Frickers, who, probably, were at this time betrothed, as they afterwards married Southey and Coleridge, also became Pantisocrats, and contributed not a little to the spirit and hopefulness of the plan.

Edmund Seward, of whom Southey frequently speaks in terms of the warmest eulogy for his strong virtues, was the first to perceive the impracticability of the scheme. He observed that there was too great a natural disparity in the individuals that were to compose this community for it long to exist upon the basis they had established. He felt that they were hunting after a shadow, and were staking their all upon a single throw. The opinions of Southey, Coleridge, and himself, differed in some of the most essential points; and until there was a greater uniformity,—a perfect uniformity in their moral being was necessary,—it was evident to him that the equality, the fraternity, and the liberty they wished to create, were altogether ideal. Discussions, he was satisfied, would arise of such a character as must destroy eventually the harmony of their society; nor could it be otherwise, whilst there were some ambitious to govern and others indisposed to submit. He shrewdly suspected, that if it were not the Quixotic frenzy of romance that impelled them, it was a disquieted spirit, a disaffection to society ill-grounded, and that they

would too soon, and to their serious disappointment, learn,

"Cælum, non animum mutant, qui trans mare currunt."

Being convinced that the plan was not feasible, Seward withdrew from it, and endeavoured to dissuade the rest from wasting any further time or energy upon the enterprise. But the spell was upon them, and they could not, until the false excitement had exhausted itself, shake off the delusion. Every inquiry respecting the climate, the soil, the vegetation, the seasons, the periods of seed-time and harvest, the expectations of the crops, the probable expenses of their voyage and future settlement in the colony, and the proper month for sailing, was made, and no preparation which it was in their power to forward was relaxed. But an insurmountable obstacle now began to present itself. It was discovered that there were no funds, and it was painfully evident, that even a Utopia could not be founded without the aid of the *vilius aurum*.

It was computed that 2000*l.* would set them fairly afloat. The passage-money, for as many as had already enlisted, they estimated at 400*l.*; the rest was to purchase land, clear the ground, procure provisions, or whatever was requisite for the well-being of the community. The effects of all put together would not raise that sum. Southey was the foremost and most sanguine upon the occasion. There was the "Joan of

Arc,"—a manuscript epic,—it might be offered to the publishers. But these gentlemen were known more as cormorants than pelicans. There was, consequently, little hope from that quarter. He had some prospect, however, of a future fortune, based upon some uncertain title-deeds or will of an uncle. It might be possible—such was the train of his thoughts—to raise a loan upon the rever-sionary interest of the property, and that the bill-brokers or money-changers might be tempted to advance a sufficient sum upon those securities. The title-deeds, upon examination, proved valueless, and the will of an uncle—he had already shown his capriciousness—was equally insubstantial. The requisite funds could not be raised, and it was found necessary to postpone the day of sailing.

Delays and postponements are proverbially unfavourable to the execution of any plan; and unequivocal signs of the impracticability of their scheme began to force themselves irresistibly upon the attention of the chiefs of Pantisocracy. Southey was, however, tenacious of his purpose, and his reluctance to throw up the enterprise was manifested in a desire to experimentalize in some retired spot of North Wales. To this Coleridge objected, and both began now to perceive the necessity of confining their views to the realities, and preparing for the exigencies, of life. This, perhaps, thoroughly undeceived them as to the feasibility of their scheme, as it must have reduced them to reflect

calmly upon the probabilities of success in such an association. Southey, however, was the first to abandon a scheme of which Coleridge was the originator, and the latter, with a décent exhibition of affection for his abortive project, felt aggrieved at his friend's conduct. A temporary misunderstanding ensued ; but this estrangement lasted only a short time, and both were quickly devising more rational plans for their subsistence.

CHAPTER IV.

Prospects in Life — Miss Tyler — Dependence upon Literature
— Lectures at Bristol — Publication of "Joan of Arc" — Return
of Mr. Hill to England — Southey prepares for a Voyage to
Lisbon — His Marriage.

WHILST the fever of Pantisocracy was upon him, the whole time and energies of Southey were engaged in it. His attendance at Oxford had been interrupted, and all serious thoughts absorbed by the predominant ideas of happiness that awaited him and his fellow-colonists in the Western World. Having thrown off the delusion, it was necessary to inquire into less visionary matters, and to discover what course he should adopt for his future support, the most pressing and weighty reasons urging him to the consideration.

The Church was still open to him, and he was assured of the influence and valuable assistance of his friends on his entering it.* We have, however, seen

* "Till Christmas last I supported myself wholly by the profits of my writing. . . . Thus you may see, that the only

that he could not conscientiously subscribe to its articles of faith, and he did not scruple to reject the idea. At first he was apprehensive that his refusal might give offence to his uncle. Such was not the case. "I knew what your politics were, and therefore had reason to suspect what your religion might be," quietly observed Mr. Hill, who shared the prejudices of the day as to the necessary connexion of servility and faith, but who had nothing of the persecuting spirit about him. But such moderation it was not always Southey's good fortune to experience; and the mildness of this rebuke came, as it were, to set off the conduct of his eccentric relative, Miss Tyler. The imperiousness of her character had induced him to delay the announcement of the Pantisocratic scheme and his intended marriage with Edith Fricker to the eleventh hour. Consequently, when everything was deemed ready, and the day, or at least the month—it was the March of 1793—fixed, he ventured to break the subject to his aunt. Knowing the tropical warmth of her temper, he had a right to expect the waters to be ruffled, but a tempest of unusual violence ensued. Ordering him to quit her house, and never see her face again, she turned him out of a piti-

means I have ever possessed of assisting my mother was by entering the Church. God knows I would exchange every intellectual gift which he has blest me with, for implicit faith to have been able to do this. . . ."—*Letter to John May, Esq. July 15th, 1799.*

less October night into the street, to find a shelter where he best could. His mother lived at Bath. It was a cold and rainy night, with a hard wind blowing; and the distance twelve miles. He performed the journey on foot the same night. It is melancholy to reflect that the aunt, whose anger was immitigable, and the nephew, never saw one another again.

Being cast adrift upon the world, — for Southey had always found a home in Miss Tyler's house, — there was an urgent necessity for action. He had repudiated physic, and loathed the law. It was, therefore, no slight difficulty to choose a profession. His heart was set towards literature, but he knew too well the drudgery and precariousness of such labour to depend upon it for his daily bread. As a source of refinement, as the pleasure of his leisure hours, as the path to undying fame, he was ready to regard its claims with the highest respect. But he could not disguise to himself the fact, that it was a field which offered no substantial prizes to the ambition of its devotees. The Church, the Army, the Bar, even the Medical Profession, held out rewards and honours to the distinguished among its members; but Literature had no place, no recognised position in society, and he, with many others, shrank from encountering its mental toils and unrequited labours. Necessity, however, drew him into the vortex, and circumstances kept him chained to it to the last hour of his intellectual existence.

In conjunction with Robert Lovell, Southey had published during the course of this year a small volume of poems; at the same time a vacancy occurred on the "Telegraph" newspaper, and the situation of reporter was offered him. Being apprehensive that the night-work would be injurious to his health, he declined the office; nor could he disguise his disinclination to becoming a political and party writer. Seeing so many avenues closed, he determined to deliver a series of lectures. Coleridge, who was also in straitened circumstances, joined him in the plan, choosing political and moral, whilst Southey selected historical subjects. Tickets for admission rose to half-a-guinea the course. The lectures were delivered at Bristol, well attended, and generally admired. Some literary employment which Southey obtained upon a new publication, called "The Citizen," and for which he was to receive a guinea and a half per week, was a more substantial and permanent source of income; and as he was economical in all his habits, this small sum, in his hands, sufficed to support him comfortably.

Southey had made an effort, but without success, to print his "Joan of Arc" by subscription. Its publication, such was the warmth of his imagination, would bring his name conspicuously before the world, and he should be numbered amongst the immortal poets of his country. Already he felt the bays growing around his temples. It is not, therefore, surprising, that an oppor-

tunity which now occurred of producing his epic, should fill him with the most animated delight. During the first stage of the Pantisocratic fever, Southey had been introduced by Lovell to Mr. Cottle, bookseller and publisher of Bristol, and likewise a poet, whose name will ever be pleasingly associated with that of the Laureate's. Admiring a portion of the poem that was read to him, this generous patron offered fifty pounds, and as many copies as Southey might have subscriptions for, for the manuscript. The whole of this business was transacted on the most friendly terms; and, to do greater justice to the aspiring poet, Mr. Cottle procured a new press and a new type, and determined that the work should make its appearance amongst the grave and ponderous ranks of quarto volumes.

Whilst, however, "Joan of Arc" was going through the press, Mr. Hill returned from Portugal. Observing that his nephew was still without a settled plan for the future, he took occasion quietly to remonstrate with him, and delicately adduced such reasons as might, in his opinion, remove the scruples and doubts in Southey's mind. His arguments, however, were firmly met: and when he perceived that it would be impossible, so firmly rooted were his republican principles, to divert his nephew from them, a further proposition was made to him that he should accompany his uncle back to Lisbon. He would, it was suggested, have an opportunity of becoming acquainted with the literature of Spain and

Portugal, a wide field for his reading and research, and entirely untrodden. The offer thus made could not have found any one more capable of appreciating it, or benefiting by it, than Southey. His application to reading, his fondness for quaint and antiquated books and manuscripts, his attachment to the histories of the past, combined to render him peculiarly adapted for entering upon such a course of literature. Accordingly the proposal was accepted, and preparations for the voyage commenced.

Before quitting England, however, he determined to marry Miss Edith Fricker, to whom he had been for some time betrothed. This may be censured by some, as an imprudent step; but the feeling which prompted it was no less honourable than generous. He knew his own constancy; the attachment with which he regarded her he was conscious would continue unabated: he felt that her faith in him was entire. But an objection had always been urged by his friends against the marriage. It was even rumoured that one object with which he was persuaded to the proposed journey was to weaken his affection for her, and in removing every shade of anxiety from her mind he recognised his duty. Another reason might be adduced. The friends of Miss Fricker were in reduced circumstances, and he was desirous of relieving their necessities by aiding in her support. A feeling of delicacy might induce a refusal of such remittances as

he should have it in his power to send, in their present relation to one another, but he felt that were he her husband no such objection could exist.

On the 14th of November, 1793, the day appointed for his leaving Bristol to meet the packet at Falmouth, this romantic marriage was celebrated. As soon as the ceremony was performed, the husband and wife parted at the church-door; the one to pursue his journey to foreign shores; the other to take up her abode with their mutual friend Mr. Cottle, until the return of her husband. The wedding-ring she wore around her neck, and retained her maiden name, until the report of her marriage having become generally known, concealment was useless.

CHAPTER V.

Delay at Falmouth—Character of Mr. Hill—Portuguese History—Coruña—Spanish Inns—Description of the Town—His Journey—Mules and Bells—Description of Scenery—Villages—The Country People—Madrid—The Palace—The Theatres—The Fiesta de Novillos—Grand Parade of the King—Entrance to Badajoz—Adea Gallega—Lisbon—"Letters from Spain and Portugal"—Character of Southey.

UPON his arrival at Falmouth, Southey found that adverse winds had detained the vessel, and that a delay of an indefinite period might be the consequence. As the wind, too, might change, and the packet appear at any hour in the offing, he was obliged to keep himself in readiness to embark at a moment's notice. In this solitary and captive condition—for he was unacquainted with a single person in the town, and his recent separation from his wife made his loneliness still more painfully sensible to him—he amused himself by taking short trips into the immediate neighbourhood, writing letters to his friends, and watching the waters of the horizon. At length, after a week had been thus consumed, the

vessel was seen stealing stealthily along, and in a short time Southey was on board, bidding adieu to the white cliffs of his native land.

In the company of his uncle the time passed as pleasantly away as the Bay of Biscay would allow. The voyage gave him an opportunity of becoming better acquainted with his friend and benefactor. In Mr. Hill he found a gentleman who, by his education and natural accomplishments, extensive reading, and refined taste, could direct and delight, as well as appreciate, the aspirations of genius. In his conversation he preserved a moderation, and in his general conduct a generosity, that tested the qualities of his heart; and though wide was the difference between him and his nephew on matters religious and political, he allowed not a diversity of sentiment to contract the liberality of his feelings, or disturb the equanimity of his temper. He had resided for some time in Lisbon, and been led by the peculiar bent of his mind to inquire into the history and literature of Spain and Portugal. His office, as Chaplain of the British Factory at Lisbon, gave him peculiar facilities for prosecuting his researches. Nor did he omit to avail himself of the opportunities thus afforded. He had by this means acquired an extensive library of rare and curious books upon the subject, and several manuscripts, containing information about these countries, as well as their Eastern and American dependencies, little, if not al-

together unknown. To this library Southey had subsequently free access ; and Mr. Hill was greatly gratified to perceive in his nephew so strong a fondness for the records of the past, and gave full scope to the indulgence of this passion.

Instead of sailing direct for the Tagus, Mr. Hill had determined upon taking an inland tour as far as Madrid, and returning from thence by Talavera de la Reyna and Badajos, into Portugal. Accordingly he disembarked at Coruña, which they reached on the 16th of December. Upon landing, Southey, like every other observant traveller, was confused by the multiplicity of novel objects that surrounded him—the dress of the inhabitants, the style of the architecture, and the strangeness of their, to him, unintelligible language, which, more than anything, conveyed to his mind the conviction that he was in a land of strangers.

The accommodations in this, as well as all the other towns he passed through, he found infamously bad. The character of the hotel—it was the best in the place—the habits of the inmates, and the taste of the cooks, equally disgusted him. Every dish was saturated with oil, rancid, to gratify the palate of the Spaniards, and garlic, intolerably strong in odour ; whilst the cellarage supplied a meagre wine, which exalted the English small beer into nectar. The same room served for a dormitory and parlour, and so dreadful was the suffering he endured on retiring to rest—

equivocal term!—that he imagined himself sufficiently “*flead* * alive,” to represent for a painter the martyrdom of St. Bartholomew.

“Jacob’s pillar of stone,” writes Southey, describing his first night in Spain, “was a down-cushion compared to that which bruised my head last night; and my bed had all possible varieties of hill and vale, in whose recesses the fleas lay safe, or otherwise I should inevitably have broken their bones by rolling over them. Our apartment is certainly furnished with windows; and he who takes the trouble to examine may convince himself that they have once been glazed. The night air is very cold, and I have one solitary blanket; but it is a very pretty one, with red and yellow stripes. Add to this catalogue of comforts, that the cats were saying soft things in most vile Spanish, and you may judge what refreshment I have derived from sleep.”

When Southey had sufficiently recovered from the fatigue of the voyage, the town and its attractions were successively visited. Well paved, and containing a good market-place ornamented with an elegant fountain, Coruña disgusted him with the profusion of its filth, which, instead of being carried off by proper scavengers or sewage, was left in the middle of the street until the sun dried it up, or the wind swept it

* The pun is Southey’s.

away. As he advanced farther into the country, however, the same uncleanly economy prevailed; and though he could not become reconciled to the offensive custom, he grew, perhaps, less conscious of it.

After remaining at Coruña for a few days, they proceeded upon their journey in a *coach-and-six*—the six referring to the mules, which were decorated with blue, yellow, and purple ribbons, and a number of ever-jingling bells. To an Englishman the use of these musical ornaments—there were sixteen to each beast—might appear useless. But the Spaniard assigns four reasons for using them. The roads are narrow in his country, and the sound of the bells gives warning to any approaching muleteer not to enter the defile till the road is clear; they are, also, found serviceable of a dark night, and so far reason justifies the practice; but how far the animal is gratified, as they affirm, by a torrent of discordant notes ringing in his ears, the naturalist must decide; and those who will may believe that the cross, which is inscribed upon each bell, wards off the devil.

“The road,” says Southey, “is excellent. It is one of those works in which despotism applies its giant force to purposes of public utility. The villages we passed through were mean and dirty; the houses are in that style of building with which the pencil of Gaspar Poussin had taught me to associate more ideas of comfort than I realised. I was delighted with the wild

and novel prospect: hills beyond hills far as the eye could extend, part involved in shadow, and the more distant illumed with the westering sun; but no object ever struck me as more picturesque than where a few branchless pines on the distant eminence crested the light with their dark-foliaged heads. The water winds into the country, forming innumerable islets of sand—and, as we advanced, of mud—sometimes covered with such vegetation as the tide would suffer. We saw fig-trees and chestnuts, and passed one little coppice of oaks—scanty trees, and evidently struggling with an ungrateful soil. By the wayside were many crucifixes for adoration, and I counted six monumental crosses; but it is probable that most of these monuments are over people who have been murdered in some private quarrel, and not over robbers.”

As Southey and his uncle continued their route, the country became more wild and more beautiful. On one side bold and abrupt mountains; here bald precipices of rocks; there ranges richly varied with pines, leafless chestnut-trees, and oaks that still retained their withered foliage, rose before them. On the right a soft dingle, sunk at the base of a dark and barren hill, following the windings of a limpid rivulet, reposed beneath them. On the left a stream, foaming along its rocky channel, now intercepted by some tall cliff, now visible beyond, wound its serpentine length along until lost in thick woods. The furze which covered the hills, and was in

blossom, lent a rich colouring and additional charm to the features of the landscape.

If nature were so beautiful and grand, and his feelings sometimes wrought up to a state of rapturous delight whilst gazing upon them, the description which Southey gives of man and his habitations were less favourable. "I should think," thus commences the picture, "Griteru the worst town in Europe, if we were not now at Bamonde.* Judge how bad that place must be where I do not wish that you were with me. At none of these houses have they any windows, and if you would exclude the air you must also exclude the light. There are two beds in the room; their high heads sanctified with a crucifix, which M—— observed must certainly be a monumental cross in memory of the last traveller devoured by the bugs."

The scenery varying as they proceeded onward, sometimes grand and sublime, always beautiful, they visited Lugo Astorza Benevente, Vega del Toro, and arrived at Madrid after having accomplished a journey of four hundred and ten miles in about three weeks. The same picture of humanity presented itself from one end to the other. The villages were poor and mean, the houses low and unaccommodating, subject to every kind of discomfort, and always uncleanly. Of the inhabitants an uniformly unfavourable description is

* Towns situated in Galicia, at which Southey and his uncle were compelled to stop during their journey.

given. Possessed of that careless exhilaration which belongs to people reduced by despotism to regard their property and their lives as dependent upon the caprice of a government, they were always in good humour, and exhibited a reckless cheerfulness which contrasted strongly with the squalid poverty of their condition. Women would praise, and affect a display of taste by praising the muslins of England, who had scarcely a rag to cover them, and who took so little care of their person that they seldom indulged in the luxury of a bath. The only entrance for the light or exit for the smoke of the room of their posada, or inn, was through the stable. Occasionally a public building, a cathedral, a bridge, a nobleman's mansion, a tower, or a market-place, stood out from amongst these lowly hovels, and the monasteries and convents bespoke a higher degree of taste and more considerations of comfort; yet Southey frequently found the *palaces* of the state officers, the magistrates, and other important functionaries, such crazy, ill-adjusted buildings, that they would disgrace the meanest house in England by a comparison. For the greater portion of the year the climate is so mild and genial that a shelter from the intolerable rays of the sun—and what better shield than the umbrageous foliage of the cork-tree or the groves of orange?—is all that is required. Beneath the shade of trees the summer months are passed—and summer months are not so fleet in Spain as in our northern climes—

and every kind of gaiety and merriment is pursued by the careless Spaniard. The easy faith that is inculcated in the tender mind of the child—the belief in the power and miracles of saints, the mother of God, and the holiness of the Church—relieves their consciences from the weightier thoughts of the future. Absolved from past sin by the parish priest on performance of some trifling penance, they are ready to commit some new crime, or plunge into the excitement of village festivals, which abstract the mind from the duties of life and degenerate man in the indulgence of effeminate pleasures. Religion and civil government go hand in hand. Where the one is pure and enlightened, where its doctrines breathe a spirit of liberality and independence, there the other is great and powerful, the people are free and happy, the nations wealthy and prosperous. In Spain the civil institutions have caught the temper of the ecclesiastical polity. The latter, ignorant and bigoted, cruel and avaricious, has instructed the government in the arts of injustice, rapacity, and oppression, has reduced the people to a degraded and enslaved condition, and rendered the country poor, weak, and distracted. By one of the laws all innkeepers are compelled to give a daily account of what persons have been in their posada during the day, their names, their conduct, and their conversation, to the magistrate of the district; and are, if any man of a suspicious appearance walk by their houses, to inform

the same functionary, on pain of being answerable for any mischief he may do. Such is the system of espionage which Southey found in that country; nor is it much improved after a lapse of half a century and the experience of revolutions and dethronements.

The approach to Madrid from the north is acknowledged to be very beautiful. The number of towers, the bridge of Segovia, and the palace, give it an appearance of grandeur which there are no suburbs to destroy; and a fine poplar-planted walk by the river gives an agreeable variety to the scene. Within the walls a less imposing scene was presented. The houses were tall, and the streets so narrow that it was at the risk of considerable injury from passing vehicles that Southey could venture down some of the thoroughfares; and "*Le Calle angusta de los periglos*," the narrow street of dangers, seems by its name to indicate the frequency of accidents that occurred there. The necessaries of life were extremely dear, and the comforts not to be procured. It was Southey's opinion that if its central position be subtracted, all its advantages as the metropolis and city of the court would be subtracted. Severely cold in winter, it is intolerably hot in summer; and the Manzanares, its only river, is a shallow and unnavigable stream, and only of any importance when heavy winds or the melting of the snow swelled it into a rapid torrent.

Yet there were edifices which presented much mag-

nificence; the gates were numerous and handsome, and the fountains pleasant and picturesque.* The Prado was a fine promenade, and the Calle de Alcalá might rank with some of the finest streets in Europe. There was, moreover, a cleanliness exhibited in the condition and aspect of the city, which he had not experienced since his landing at Coruña. At the picture-gallery of the Palace he derived a high and intellectual pleasure, and in the cloisters of the new Franciscan convent received a similar gratification; the whole history of that saint, from his cradle to his grave, being represented in a fine series of drawings, which he considered deserved to be engraved, so ably had "human genius been employed in perpetuating human absurdity." The national theatre he frequented for the sake of the Spanish comedy, and was glad to see it patronized by crowded houses; but the Italian opera was neglected, and he expresses his astonishment upon the occasion, that "an amusement so absurd" should so generally be patronized by the different courts of Europe, and points to the injustice inflicted upon native industry by the profuse encouragement of exotic talent.

Few sojourners at Madrid have not visited a bull-fight. Southey attended the Fiesta de Novillos, a milder kind of sport, in which the object is to tease the

* Sometimes water, issuing from the mouth of a bear, instead of a Triton, a dolphin, or a river-god, exhibited a want of taste in the artist or founder.

animal and render him irritated, rather than furious and savage. It might be called the *comedy* of the bull-fight. The horns of the bullock are tipped to prevent any serious injury to the combatants, and the heroes of the fight, enclosed in basket-work, approach fearlessly to the enemy. The fun to the spectators consists in the aggressors rushing away and leaping over the barriers, or being rolled about in their basket-case by the bullock. After this representation four tame oxen were driven in and chased about by the teased beast, which was followed by the more formidable and cruel spectacle of the boar-hunt. There were fifteen thousand persons present, men, women, and children. What hope is there of a nation, is Southey's reflection upon the occasion, where such are the fashionable popular amusements?

After a stay of scarcely a fortnight in Madrid, Southey and his uncle commenced their journey to Lisbon. Although the general features of the country were the same as those on their way to Madrid, yet the olive plantations of the south and woods of evergreen oaks made their progress now more diversified and lively. After a day's toil and travel, they came in sight of the towers of Talavera, upon which town Southey bestows the eulogy of its having the only bookseller's shop that he had seen in the provinces.

Their stay in Madrid was prolonged by peculiar circumstances. The king had set out upon a visit with

his whole court to the King of Portugal. The interview was to take place on the frontiers nearest to Badajos on the Spanish, and Elvas on the Portuguese side. The retinue of his majesty on this journey consisted of seven thousand persons. Everything—such is the law or the absolutism of the land—of whatever character it might be, if required, was embargoed for his service, and the wretched subject lamented, in consequence, the waste of his time, too frequently the loss of his property. At first, Mr. Hill entertained some hope, that by the influence of the Marquis Yranda a carriage might be secured: but none could be obtained; and such was the scarcity of accommodation, that six hundred people of rank, independently of their attendants, were obliged to lie in the open air on the first night of this parade. When, however, Southey and his uncle had advanced about 120 miles upon their route, they found themselves in the neighbourhood of the court; and “never did I witness,”* says Southey, “a more melancholy scene of desolation! His most Catholic Majesty travels like the king of the gypsies; his retinue strip the country without paying for anything, sleep in the woods, and burn down the trees.” On the road, mules, horses, and asses, were found lying dead, destroyed by excessive fatigue. The charioteer—the same was the proprietor of the vehicle—when they

* “Letters from Spain and Portugal,” p. 201.

approached within three days' journey of the procession, refused at first to proceed any farther, being apprehensive that his carriage would be seized; but as the only other path lay amongst the mountains, and an equal danger arose from the robbers and the torrents, the difficulty was at length overcome.

At Truxillo, so completely had the court demolished everything that they could procure no kind of provision, not even an egg. With the town itself, seen from the road to Badajos, Southey was particularly struck. The ruins of many outworks were visible, and grand rocks; the broom growing in blossom amongst the crevices. The mountain of Santa Cruz was another picturesque object, and formed the boldest mass of abrupt rocks, interspersed with cultivated spots and olive-yards, he had ever seen; and a village, with a pretty convent lying at the base of it, gave the additional charm of life to a beautiful and magnificent picture.

They soon after arrived at Badajos, went through the formalities of the Customs, were disgusted with the scrutiny and delay, hurried on to the river that separates the two kingdoms, crossed it by a ford—the bridge was reserved for royal wheels—and found shelter at Elvas. The scene that here presented itself was one of extreme gaiety: between the two towns booths were erected for the courtiers passing backwards and forwards, and for the multitude who thronged around the royal tent.

After five days' further travelling they arrived at Adea Gallega, where they were fortunate enough to procure a boat; and after a rough and unpleasant passage of two hours landed at Lisbon, just in time to feel the shock of an earthquake. Southey remained on the banks of the Tagus for about four months, disgusted with the uncleanness of the city, the manners of the people, and the conduct of the government, but charmed with the scenery of the neighbourhood, the beauties of Arabida and the orange-groves of Cintra. He returned home about the middle of May. As he made a longer stay in Lisbon in the first year of the present century, his remarks and impressions of that city will be given at that period of his life.

Southey had spent much time during this tour in acquiring a knowledge of the language and literature of the two countries, and on his return to England published an account of his travels and inquiries in the "Letters from Spain and Portugal." The most friendly feelings existed between himself and his uncle. The latter, writing to a friend, thus describes the character of his nephew:—"He is a very good scholar, of great reading, of an astonishing memory; when he speaks he does it with fluency, with a great choice of words. He is perfectly correct in his behaviour, of the most exemplary morals, and the best of hearts. Were his character different, or his abilities not so extraordinary, I should be less concerned about him; but to see a young man of

such talent as he possesses, by the misapplication of them, lost to himself and to his family, is what hurts me very sensibly indeed. In short, he has everything you could wish a young man to have, excepting common sense and prudence." Southey's not entering the Church, in which he might have obtained preferment, the readiness with which he expressed his sentiments on religious political subjects, and his having married without any visible means of supporting a wife, are the symptoms of imprudence alluded to in the letter.

CHAPTER VI.

Death of Robert Lovell—His Widow—Opinions—Literary Labours—Study of the Law—Life in London—Burton—John Rickman—His brother Thomas—Convalescent Asylum—"Morning Post"—George Burnett—His brother Henry—Visit to Norwich—Mr. Taylor—Verses to his Wife.

ÆTAT. 22-24.

THE last person to whom Southey bade adieu upon leaving his native shore was his brother-in-law, Robert Lovell. The first news that greeted his return was the melancholy tidings of this young man's death. Having risen prematurely from a sick bed, and exposed himself to too violent exercise on a hot summer's day, he fell a victim to a severe fever, the result of his indiscretion. A widow with one child was left destitute by the event. To relieve her helpless condition, and to place her in a position where she might by her own exertions obtain a livelihood, Southey collected the best pieces of the deceased poet, wrote a preface and dedicatory letter to the widow; and as the work was published by subscription, used his influence with his friends to increase the list, and make the sale a profitable speculation. It may

here be mentioned, that Mrs. Lovell afterwards became one of his household ; that she was supported by him until his death, and was subsequently received into his son's household, and that she still remains the last survivor of the Pantisocratic scheme.

The opinions of Southey during his absence had undergone no perceptible change. His views upon ecclesiastical if not political subjects continued apparently the same, but it is evident now they had become considerably modified by his intercourse with the world. Every day's experience was teaching him a new lesson, and though advocating the same principles, his thoughts had been much influenced by contemporary events.* The enthusiasm of his earlier years was cooling down. The ambition which had filled his heart with vague and cosmopolitan affections, the visionary ideas for reforming the world that floated in his mind, were yielding to

* So early as 1793, his feelings, if not his opinions, upon democratic government had suffered a severe shock, "I am sick of this world, and discontented with every one in it," he writes at this period. "The murder of Brissot has completely harrowed up my faculties, and I begin to believe that virtue can only aspire to content in obscurity; for happiness is out of the question. I look round the world, and everywhere find the same mournful spectacle,—the strong tyrannizing over the weak, man and beast; the same depravity pervades the whole creation; oppression is triumphant everywhere: and the only difference is, that it acts in Turkey through the anger of a grand seignior; in France, of a revolutionary tribunal; and in England, of a prime minister."

a more practical view of things. He believed the world to possess more attainable happiness than he had hitherto imagined, and contracting his wishes within the limits of his own hearth or the circle of his friends, he felt that in the due discharge of his duty there was more real satisfaction than in ranging the regions of metaphysics or fretting about the unreasonableness of monarchies or pantisocracies.

Southey had resumed, upon his return, his literary labours, as a temporary means of subsistence; but he still dreaded depending upon his pen for his daily support. His ambition was to write for the world, and during the leisure of his life to produce works that should raise and perpetuate a brilliant reputation. He therefore repudiated, in his heart, the manner in which his time seemed frittered away, as well as the uncertainty of the provision it made for himself and those dependent upon him. To relieve himself from the necessity of periodical writing, he determined to undertake the study of the law, and for that purpose entered at Gray's Inn in the February of 1799. The means of accomplishing his object were afforded him by the generosity of his friend Mr. Charles Wynn, who, upon the ground of services rendered to him by Southey at Oxford, but more probably as a mark of his esteem and friendship, liberally allowed him an annuity of 160*l*.

Two antipathies were to be overcome by Southey in his new undertaking. He had never disguised his dislike

of the legal profession and large towns ; but to carry out his desires, a residence in London during a great portion of the year was indispensable. He declared, however, that no exertion should be wanting on his part in the trial ; and even if he could not at length bring himself to find actual pleasure in it, he was determined that the repugnance he felt should not obtain the mastery over him. He, however, evidently understood not the study of the law. Having entered it with the purpose of gaining an easy independence, he hoped to satisfy its claims by acquiring just sufficient for general practice. Such a languid spirit would be fatal in any study, how much more so in a study in which there are few internal incitements, and where dry terms and abstruse technicalities not only surpass the comprehension of the uninitiated world, but puzzle and bewilder the brains of the elect. In fact, no labour requires more devotion and hearty application than the acquisition of a knowledge of the law. Southey further endeavoured, strange as it may appear, to make this study and the composition of poetry amalgamate. When he replaced the ponderous tomes of jurisprudence upon their creaking shelves, " Madoc " was at hand ; and with the Prince of Wales he wandered over foreign shores, and refreshed his mind in the luxuriant woods and boundless pampas of Mexico. It will not, therefore, seem surprising that Southey's progress was slow,

or, perhaps, more properly speaking, retrogressive, and that at a subsequent period he relinquished the profession altogether.

Southey's early habits, it has been remarked, had induced a spirit of reserve, which affected his conduct in society through life, and rendered him at all times extremely reluctant to enter its circle. The company of a few friends whom he thoroughly understood, and to whom he was equally well known, no man could more fully appreciate or enjoy. On the occasion of this visit to London, however, he was introduced to more of its world than was usual with him. He became acquainted with several *literati* of the day, principally of the Godwin school, of whom he has left no flattering description. But his most agreeable hours were spent with Grosvenor Bedford, Charles Wynn, and Charles Lamb. In their society he felt himself perfectly at home, and could throw off that reserve which so habitually enshrouded him. Then he would enliven all by the cheerfulness of his conversation, his flow of fun and anecdote, and in the fascination of this happiness forget the dusty chambers and the busy, noisy hum, of the vast city around him.

His literary employments at this time—for his hands were never void of some such occupations—were translations for a bookseller, and essays for the "Monthly Magazine." The translation was of the second volume of Necker on the Revolution, Dr.

Aikin and his son having just completed the first. The essays were upon Spanish and Portuguese poetry; but, in addition to these, he had in contemplation a series of poems upon the scenes he had passed through in his travels, embodying the feelings and reflections they naturally gave rise to.

It was not long before he began to consider whether Blackstone might not be as readily studied in the free and fresh air of the country as in the dingy courts of Gray's Inn. He sighed for the woods and green fields; and as the spring advanced he determined to leave town. Hardly waiting the last dinner of the term, he hurried off to Southampton to obtain lodgings for the summer. He failed, however, in the attempt here, but was more successful at Burton, near Whitchurch; whither he went to reside with his wife and mother, Mrs. Lovell, and her child. In this retreat he could fill his fancy full of natural and rural beauties. The sea was before them, the New Forest at hand, and a congregation of streams, the clearest he had ever seen. The enjoyment which he thus derived from indulging his fondness for the country, was still more increased by the society at this time gathered around his board. The liberal and friendly Joseph Cottle, and his brother Thomas Southey, at that time midshipman on board the "Phœbe" frigate, became partakers of his hospitality. The presence of the latter was particularly agreeable and satisfactory.

Having been taken prisoner by the French, he was confined in the town of Brest, and with others of his vessel subjected to very harsh treatment. He had only been recently set at liberty, and the use he made of his leave of absence was to join his friends at Burton. Charles Lloyd, who, though not a lake-poet, has been associated with them, also became his guest ; and it was Southey's good fortune to enjoy the occasional society of John Rickman and John May, who continued amongst his warmest friends to the close of his life. The former became afterwards one of the clerks in the House of Commons ; and for the latter, he commenced that series of amusing autobiographical letters which, we lament, he did not live to complete. Towards the end of September, however, Southey left his rural retreat for Bath, whence, having paid a short visit to his mother, he returned to London to resume the study of the law.

His principal literary occupations at this time were magazine-writing, and preparing a second edition of "Joan of Arc." In this revision he extracted those portions which came from the pen of Coleridge, and made several other alterations that suggested themselves to his more matured judgment, or had been advised by friendly critics. To enable him to do more justice to his epic, admission was offered him into the library of a Dissenting community, where a mine of literary wealth lay concealed beneath the dust and cobwebs. The

"Critical Review," upon which he had obtained an engagement, also took up a considerable portion of his time.

Nor were his labours confined to literary or legal pursuits. His mind was ever busy in conceiving plans and schemes that he hoped might benefit mankind. Amongst the first that he was engaged in, and which now occupied his attention, was a charitable institution, which, if established, would relieve the sick of the poorer classes of an infinite amount of suffering. His co-partners in the design were John May and Carlisle, whose acquaintance he had made during his former stay in London. The object of this institution was to assist those who were discharged from the hospitals as cured. It must be evident to all that, by returning to their former homes, where impure air, cold, damp, and squalid filth, too frequently encompass them, they almost invite a relapse. It occurred to Southey and his friends that this evil might be averted by having a large house, with extensive grounds attached to it, fitted up to accommodate the recovered, though still debilitated patient. It was proposed, also, in their plan, to employ the inmates in the cultivation of the soil, the produce of which, it was hoped, would cover the expenses, whilst the exercise would strengthen the body and interrupt the monotony of the day. In winter evenings, when the state of the weather prevented outdoor labour, it was suggested that a congenial employ-

ment might be found in the manufacture of nets, matting, or baskets. The women, who were to have a separate department in the establishment, were to have their appropriate duties assigned to them, and assist in the fabrication of articles which might contribute to the service and support of this "Convalescent Asylum." The labour of the patients was to be remunerated, and not exacted for more than six hours in the day. What they thus earned was to supply them with a fund for recommencing life when they left the institution. This, like others of Southey's plans, was found to be too comprehensive; insuperable difficulties arose in the way of its establishment, and the project, after engaging a considerable portion of his thoughts, was ultimately abandoned.

Finding his residence in London unfavourable to his own and his wife's health, and to avoid the "swarms" of acquaintances who "buzzed" about him, and spoiled him of his valuable time, he remained but a short time in town, and towards the latter end of March retired to Bristol. Before he left, a new, and to him not unpleasant engagement, was entered into. A portion of the "Morning Post" was devoted to original poetry, and being requested to contribute to its columns at a guinea a-week, he readily accepted the offer, and liberally complied with the engagement.

One of the most ardent friends of Pantisocracy, and one, perhaps, who suffered most by his connexion with

it, was George Burnett. He had been sent to Oxford with the view of entering the Church, but having become acquainted with Southey and Coleridge, he was inoculated with their new philosophy, and the advantages of their new republic. But his education did not rest here. They shook his confidence in the orthodox principles of the Christian belief, and cast his mind adrift upon the pathless sea of metaphysical inquiry. When the Pantisocratic scheme failed, his purposes both of thought and action were unfixed, and he himself unable to select or follow out a profession. Changing from one object to another, he at last became a Unitarian minister.

Southey's estimate of his friend was unshaken by the turmoil and agitation of opinion he had undergone ; and such was the regard he felt for him, that he had placed his youngest brother, Henry, with him to be educated. Shortly after his return to Bristol, he determined upon a journey to Norwich, the town where Burnett was residing. Here he became introduced to Mr. Taylor, for whose learning, and many of whose opinions, he had the greatest esteem. Upon these grounds—the basis of so many of his friendships—an intimacy and correspondence, chiefly upon literary subjects, sprang up and continued for several years.

During this visit, a portion of Southey's time was spent at Ormsby, about six miles from Norwich. The

pleasantry of his description of the country is peculiarly indicative of the lightness of his heart.

From Ormsby, Southey addressed some verses to his wife, full of fine feeling and affection, from which we give the following extract:—

“ There have been hours
When I have longed to mount the winged bark,
And seek those better climes where orange-groves
Breathe on the evening gale voluptuous joy;
And, Edith, though I heard from thee alone
The pleasant accents of my native tongue,
And saw no wonted countenance but thine,
I could be happy in the stranger's land,
Possessing all in thee. Oh, best beloved,
Companion, friend, and yet a dearer name,
I trod those better climes a heartless thing:
Cintra's cool rocks, and where Arabida
Lifts from the ocean its sublimer heights,
Thine image wandered with me, and one wish
Disturbed the deep delight.”

CHAPTER VII.

Westbury — Humphry Davy — “Madoc” — Poetry — Engagements — Health — Tour through North Wales — Its Scenery — Strewing Graves — Play-writing — Literary Reputation — Reviews — A Strange Lady — Visit to London — Books — Suwarrow — Sabbath Mails — Tour through North Devon — Valley of Rocks — Settles at Barton.

ÆTAZ. 24-26.

UPON his return from Norfolk, Southey located himself at Westbury, a beautiful spot within a short distance of Bristol. Situated in a wooded district,—the parks and mansions of noblemen and opulent merchants gracing its vicinity,—it further enjoyed some of the most romantic scenery that England can boast of. In this village Southey’s passion for the country and the picturesque was amply gratified. Humphry Davy (afterwards Sir Humphry) was among the number of those friends who shared the pleasures of this season. To him would the poet frequently recite parts of his “Madoc,” which then principally engaged his thoughts,

and he felt no slight encouragement from the approbation which his friendly critic expressed. Southey, on the other hand, also gratified his friend by inhaling the || *nitrous oxide*, or celebrated laughing-gas, which he had recently discovered; and it is not improbable that they stimulated each other to unwearied exertions by indulging those impulses which seemed to speak within of future fame.

This period of Southey's life was particularly devoted to poetry. He was enthusiastically fond of it, and his engagement on the "Morning Post" encouraged it. The number of lines he threw off appear, at first sight, incredible; but when we regard the character of his verses, and remember that most of his poems were slightly constructed, not only in violation of precedent, but also without the "seductive jingle" of rhyme—that the number of feet in each line are frequently few and arbitrary, or only obedient to such rules as he has laid down for himself,—the result will not be found so startling. It might be imagined, that in giving to the world such rapid effusions he was careless of his reputation: but such was not the case. It is probable that he considered, that what he threw off for the paper were worth just as much as he was paid for them, and no more; that they were ephemeral and anonymous, and could not affect his reputation. But when, as in the instance of the volumes of "Minor Poems," his name was attached, he sent several of his productions, to be re-

viewed previous to their publication, to his friend Charles Lamb, and submitted to his taste and judgment.

Though his engagement for the "Morning Post" kept his pen constantly in his hand, and long and large were the draughts he made upon the inspiration of the Muses, he was also preparing a second edition of his "Letters from Spain and Portugal," the first volume of the "Annual Anthology," and a second edition of his "Minor Poems." The study of the law, which at first was distasteful, did not become more palatable upon a further acquaintance. He had made trial of its character, yet he could excite within himself no pleasurable interest in its behalf. The difficulty of committing to memory a set of dry terms and phrases, notwithstanding much assiduity, convinced him that he was not born under the sign Libra, and that, whatever were his natural talents, he never should be able to distinguish himself at the bar. The idea of the law, accordingly, grew into disuse, and finally faded away altogether. He was, meanwhile, intent upon the fulfilment of his literary duties, and applied himself with uninterrupted severity to reading and composition.

Ill-health, the effects of his sedentary habits and intense mental application, had been for some time creeping upon him, and unpleasant, if not dangerous, symptoms now manifested themselves. He was accordingly ordered by his physician to take regular exercise; and, with a view to restore his health to its early firmness, he spent

the summer of this year in a pedestrian tour through North Wales. His companion in this excursion was Mr. Danvers, of Bristol, one of his most agreeable acquaintances. Having visited Dilwyn, the seat of the Tylers, and Shobden, where resided another branch of his family, he penetrated into Brecon, and examined some of the wildest and most romantic scenery of that county. Dark woods—glens deep seated in the sheltering recesses of broken hills—abrupt precipices, fringed with wild brambles, or crested with murmuring pines—tall cliffs, that almost met across some rugged gorge and darkened the abyss below—defiles from whose narrow pathway the blue sky is scarcely visible—boisterous streams, overhanging woods, and tracts of land, warm, verdant, and open to the sun, delighted him with their various beauty. Southey rejoiced in such scenes, and viewed them with the feelings of a poet and a moralist.

Of the character of the Welsh peasantry he received a favourable impression during this tour. He was an acute physiognomist, and placed great faith in the formation of the human countenance as indicative of the disposition of the individual; and from the pleasing intelligence he observed in the faces of the people he partially drew his inferences. But a better criterion of their manners and habits might be found in the uniform civility he everywhere met with.

At Merthyr he witnessed the affecting ceremony of

strewing the graves. Two women were engaged in this sacred office. The one uttered, in the keenness of her sorrow, the grief that would not be restrained; the other, no less touched perhaps, but taught by a natural instinct to conceal her anguish, and let the bitterness of her heart be known to itself alone, attended in silence. The graves, which were coffin-shaped, were fenced round with white stones; upon the gentle swell herbs were planted, and over these were strewn wild flowers. That soul must indeed be cold that can see nothing affecting in such pious customs. It is true, they cannot reach the dead; the departed cannot feel them: yet if they express, as memorials frail indeed, the worth of those now no more—if they speak but of the fondness with which their memory is still regarded—if they tend but to teach a lesson of gentleness to the living, or soothe the wounded spirit of those that have been left to mourn,—shall we call them vain?

From this excursion Southey derived considerable benefit; yet when he renewed his labours, sedentary habits began again seriously to affect his health. To prevent the progress of the evil, he resorted to regular daily exercise, which was scarcely ever intermitted during the most inclement weather. His engagements, however, were not less pressing, and he had more upon his hands than he could possibly accomplish, except by constant assiduity. Such was the energy of his mind, however, that he was ever planning new works. During his

tour in Wales he first conceived the idea of writing a poem upon the destruction of Domdaniel, a Moham-medan legend, which afterwards appeared under the title of "Thalaba, the Destroyer."

It was the wish of many of his friends that he should engage in the drama, and attempt a play for the stage. In compliance with their wishes he undertook the task, but found that the plots which he had sketched contained too little incident to render success probable. "My wish is to make"—such is his reply—"something better than love the mainspring; and I have one or two sketches, but all my plots seem calculated to produce one or two great scenes, rather than a general effect." This inability or failure in himself he was willing to attribute to the fact that his attention had been too much diverted by epic writing, which he conceived permitted of a longer action, and passed over uninteresting objects. By which he would infer that Homer could not have been a Sophocles, nor Shakspeare a Milton. It cannot be denied that Southey did well in declining a task for which he felt himself ill qualified.

Southey's literary reputation, though not of rapid growth, was daily gaining ground. His writings had not met with that encouragement he so fondly anticipated, and his published poems still hung on hand; yet the booksellers found it worth their while to give him plenty of employment on the magazines and other periodicals of the day. The remuneration, however, was

small, and his time, he considered, frittered away. Reviewing, especially, seems to have occupied the greater portion of his time, and he has described with considerable gaiety the harassing nature of this employment.

An episode of a character too curious to be omitted occurred at this time, whilst Southey was resident at Westbury. One morning, whilst he and his family were at breakfast, an elderly lady, in a silk gown, a muff, and a shovel bonnet, entered the parlour where they were sitting, and without any sign of recognition, or even salutation, proceeded to the sideboard. Having, with the utmost *sang froid*, deposited her muff upon a chair, she drew a chair to the fire (it was winter), threw her shawl back over her shoulders, seated herself, and ordered breakfast. The singularity of the circumstance, and the *nonchalance* of the lady, who was respectably attired, impressed the astonished company with the idea that their guest had escaped from a lunatic asylum. Being apprehensive of evoking a spirit they could not allay, and inclined to give full scope to the strangeness of the scene, her orders were complied with. There was, however, a perfect harmlessness in their new visitor. She devoted herself in silence to her meal, and, with apparent zest, satisfied the cravings of her appetite. Having succeeded so far, she placed the chair back in its former position, resumed her shawl and muff, and as she was about to depart, inquired what she had to pay. Being

answered "Nothing," it was the stranger's turn to be surprised. "Is not this an inn?" "No!" was the reply. The good lady was confused; the mistake became apparent, and all ended in a hearty laugh. It was, however, eventually ascertained that the house in which Southey resided, and to which he had given the name of "Martin Hall," had formerly been an inn, and within the memory of the stranger who had that morning honoured them with her presence at breakfast.

In the May of this year (1799), Southey again went up to London, for the purpose of eating his dinners at Gray's Inn. His time upon such occasions was much occupied in visits to his friends. By this term we include those who had become acquainted with him as a literary man, and those whom it was a duty to see, from their connexion with literature and the press. This was to him an irksome and fatiguing task. Could he have held a levee at his chambers, and could he have satisfied his friends by such demonstrations of good-will, he would have been perfectly contented, and the reception they would have met with would have been welcome and hospitable. He could not, however, overcome his antipathy to indiscriminate calls and *soirées*, and his residence in the country but too unhappily confirmed the prejudice. Had he been thrown more into the society of the men of his own time, it is certain that he would have judged differently and more impartially of

them and their motives, and been saved the expression of many of those unjust imputations which occur in his books and disgrace their pages.

A man who is fond of knowledge must necessarily entertain an affection for his library. Southey's greatest delight, no matter where he might be, was to collect together able works, whether in manuscript or print, and upon them he set a price higher than the mere marketable value of the books. When in London, few things were a source of greater pleasure to him than a visit to an old bookstall, where, under much dust, and an antiquated "used-up" appearance, he would frequently discover rare and curious authors. This love of books, however, was not in him the desire of having so many volumes or yards of printed and bound paper. He always read the books he purchased, and, generally, where the works were of authority, made a digest of their contents; and so largely had they accumulated, that at his death he possessed, considering the limited means he had to bestow upon them, one of the most extensive and valuable libraries of any private individual in the kingdom.

Dining out one day, a party of eighteen or twenty being present, the name of Suwarrow was proposed as a toast. This created an unpleasant surprise, both to Southey and a friend who sat near him. The conduct of Suwarrow at Warsaw was sufficiently odious to every

liberal mind, and they felt indignant that such a compliment should be suggested at a British table, in honour of one who had seconded and carried out the views of a despicable tyrant. Southey was a stranger, his friend was more familiar at the house. The latter accordingly rose, and stated that there were those present who would regard it as an insult to the feelings of the nation were the toast drunk. Southey seconded the speech, and after a short conversation upon the general and upon Russian politics, the toast was withdrawn.

From Southey's letters we gather a piece of information, which may be considered useless in these precipitate days of steam and electricity, and yet may not be without interest as recording a custom that time and knowledge have abolished. Southey now returned to Bristol, and the time fixed for his starting was a Sunday evening. Having taken his seat upon the mail, he had not proceeded far before the horses gave unpleasant symptoms of restiveness and want of discipline. In fact, the coachman was for some time incapable of governing them, so that had a bridge, or turning, or one of those impediments which chance often throws in the way, been opposed to them, an upset would have been inevitable. When fatigue or his strong arm had brought them to, he offered his apology, by stating that it was customary to make trial of new horses for the

mails on Sundays, as no bags being sent out on those evenings, no interruption to business would occur whatever accident took place !

Upon his arrival at Westbury, Southey found that he should be obliged to leave Martin Hall. He had resided there only a twelvemonth, yet his reminiscences of it were ever grateful to him. Looking back, long after, when he had experienced the baselessness of many of his fondest day-dreams, and the realisations of few projects, when sorrow and affliction had visited and chastened his spirit, — he singled out the year that he had spent in this delightful spot as the happiest of his life.

On leaving Westbury he found a temporary home at the residence of his friend Danvers. On looking around him for a place to settle in, the remembrance of the many pleasant hours he had passed at Burton suggested the propriety of this spot. Accordingly, early in July he went down to a friend's at Christchurch ; and after a short delay took a house, which he was not able to occupy until Michaelmas. This interval was spent by himself and Mrs. Southey in making a tour through North Devon, and visiting some of its most remarkable scenery. Ninehead, Lynmouth, the Valley of Rocks, Ilfracombe, and Exeter, mark the route he pursued, and suggest the exquisite variety of landscape he enjoyed.

At Exeter he passed some pleasant days, abusing it as being the filthiest place in England, and eulogising

it as possessing the best collection of books of any town or city that he knew of out of London. During this tour "Madoc" was progressed with, "Thalaba" was nearly completed, and a second volume of the "Annual Anthology" in preparation. He had also resolved upon undertaking the "History of Portugal," a subject the vastness of which he contemplated with increased strength, and which, he trusted, would more than any of his previous works contribute to his permanent reputation.

Early in the October of 1799, Southey was at last settled at Burton, near Christchurch.

CHAPTER VIII.

Indisposition of Southey — Return to Lisbon — Alarm at Sea — Coast of Portugal — Residence at Lisbon — Literary Labours — State of Lisbon — The Government — Condition of the People — Crime — Negroes — Charity — Catholicism — Cintra — Journey into the Interior — Preparations for quitting Portugal.

ANNO 1799-1800.

SOUTHEY had not been long at Burton before his old symptoms began to show themselves, and so low was his nervous system reduced, that although he was not troubled with the idea of any serious danger, he was apprehensive lest his illness should settle down into the worst habits of hypochondriacism, and palsy his intellectual powers. He was advised by his physician, Dr. Beddoe, to try a milder air, and return, if possible, to Lisbon. The associations he retained of the country were agreeable. There were, it is true, difficulties of a pecuniary nature in the way; but after a month's delay the journey was rendered practicable, and every preparation immediately pressed forward.

Towards the latter end of April, Southey, accompa-

nied by his wife, left England, and on May-day arrived at Lisbon. The only excitement during the voyage was created by an incident which gave him, for the first and last time during his life, an idea of the preparations for battle. About five or six o'clock in the morning of the sixth day, whilst reposing calmly in their berths,—those excepted who were upon watch,—the crew and passengers of the packet were aroused by the announcement that a strange vessel was in sight, that all hands must be armed, and preparations for defence made. Mrs. Southey was unfortunately ill, and removed accordingly to the cockpit, where she might remain in greater security than in the cabin. Whilst every precaution was being taken, and grape-shot, bar-shot, and the other ingenious implements of war, were got into order, the cutter approached so close that the smoke from her matches could easily be distinguished, and every one on board expected an immediate engagement. The hurry of the scene dispelled reflection. When the stranger was within hearing — an awkward proximity — she was hailed. A reply in broken English appeared satisfactory to some, questionable to others. " 'T is all over, now ! " exclaimed one, feeling his breathing relieved at the sound of his native tongue. " Not so ! " replied the captain, observing the cutter making round for another vessel that was accompanying them. There were, however, no further hostile demonstrations, and when they were alongside it was found that the cutter was Eng-

lish, but manned from Guernsey, which accounted for their Frenchified language. Although Southey felt more pleasure in laying his musket back again into the chest than he did in taking it out, he confesses he was glad to have had the opportunity of experiencing what it is to prepare for action.

Early on the Wednesday morning the Berlings were visible, and behind them the rising sun, which seemed, as it were, to rest upon them for a moment, and illuminate their bold crests, before it burst forth in uninterrupted glory upon the whole expanse of land and water. A fresh breeze carried them past Mafra and the heights of Cintra, and the silver spray of the breakers could be seen as they dashed against the rocky shore. The town of Cascaes being passed, they proceeded up the Tagus towards the city of Lisbon.

Southey describes his impressions in glowing language. The convents, the quintas, the grey olive-yards, the green orange-groves, and greener vineyards, the increasing populousness of the shore, the fine buildings multiplying, the bright river reflecting the blue sky, the swarms of boats with all variety of sail, the ships riding at anchor, the city clothing the slopes of the hills; all these elements of the scene, although he was already familiar with them in detail, struck upon his imagination with bold beauty.

There is, indeed, always a pleasure in welcoming scenes we have before visited, and which have become

sacred by association. Upon his return to Lisbon, after an absence of four years, Southey found everything reappear with the fascination of novelty. The city, its towers, its convents, its squares, its waters, its inhabitants, its customs, its dress, its amusements, all seemed fresh; and the hills beyond the Tagus, blue in the azure mist and distance, and the heights behind the town, beautiful in feature and rich in vegetation, came back upon him with renewed charms. On landing he took possession of his house, which was small, but thoroughly Portuguese, with little rooms, all doors and windows, calculated for coolness. It commanded a magnificent view over the river on one side, and the Almida hills on the other. Before he could become settled visitors began to pour in upon him, and in the tediousness of returning these civil ceremonies he looked forward to a frightful waste of time. However, having arranged his rooms, and discharged the claims of etiquette, he retired into himself, to pursue his studies as uninterruptedly as the calls of society would permit. "Thalaba," now nearly finished, occupied a portion of his time; "Madoc" was to take its place when completed: but the "History of Portugal" engrossed his principal hours. In writing to Coleridge he describes the plan he had laid down of study. He determined to go through the chronicles at once, in regular order, and construct a skeleton of the narrative. Afterwards it would be time to put in the flesh and muscles.

The same picture of uncleanness that met his eye at Coruña, and the other towns of Spain he passed through during his first tour, presented itself in Portugal. Lisbon has twice been clean since the creation: "Noah's flood cleansed it once, and the fire after the earthquake purified it," is the facetious language Southey uses to convince his friends of the want of sanitary reforms in that otherwise delightful city.

Few can imagine the supineness of the government of that time. Whilst they were too negligent or idle to do anything themselves in the way of improvement, they took care that nothing should be done by others. An Englishman applied for permission, whilst Southey was resident in Lisbon, to cleanse the street in which he lived: it was denied him. Another wealthy individual, an invalid, was anxious to have the road over which his carriage passed paved, to prevent the jolting which accompanied his taking the air. On application to the proper officers, he found that same jealousy of innovation.

A government so languid and defective at once suggests the social condition of the inhabitants; nor shall we be surprised to find life and property insecure under such a feeble administration. It is a point of honour, that if a man stab another in the street no information shall be given to the police; the murderer is, therefore, allowed to escape. If a servant should rob his master, his fellow-labourers are forbidden, by

the same rule, to reveal his guilt. Every individual is at the mercy of the first ruffian he meets, and no notice taken of it. "A man was murdered this week within twenty yards of our house," writes Southey, "and we only heard it ten days afterwards by mere accident; yet all goes on smoothly, as the Tagus flows over the dead bodies that are thrown into it." Another anecdote will illustrate the personal insecurity in this kingdom. A Porto merchant had a quarrel with a Portuguese, and in consequence both always went out armed with guns, and watched for the opportunity of firing first. At last the patience of the Portuguese being exhausted, he fired the house of the merchant at night, and shot into it through the windows, hoping to kill him. This drove the merchant fairly out of the town. "The gallows here has a stationary ladder," observes Southey; "and, God knows, if the hangman did all that was necessary, he would have a hard place." But anarchy had reached such a point that prudence kept men silent; and the fear of secret assassination established a custom, or etiquette, that rendered the people the impotent spectators and passive accomplices of the greatest of crimes.

Squalid poverty and degrading idleness characterised the multitudes of Lisbon. Negroes performed the lowest domestic offices; and although by a law of the great Pombal their importation is forbidden, their descendants were kept in a state of abject servitude,

and treated with great rigour and contempt. When age has deprived them of the power of being any longer serviceable to their masters, they are turned adrift into the streets, grey-headed, and emaciated with fatigue and deprivation, to support the remaining fragment of life on the precarious chances of charity. To this class of pitiable suppliants, may be added the begging friars, who infest the highways and byeways of a Portuguese town; and, without any claims to our sympathy, aliens from nature, and nurtured only by a superstitious reverence for a perverted faith, they crowd the thoroughfares, arrest the steps of the passenger with their cries for alms, and institute a system of idleness destructive of social order and moral improvement. Sometimes a charity-school is set up on speculation, the object being gold instead of knowledge. The pupils of this academy are sent forth by their master with a basket, to supplicate for money or provisions, and in the name of *religion* it is given. Sometimes the progress of the passenger is interrupted by the processions of priests and monks, who, during certain months of the year, keep up a ceaseless saturnalia; the festivals which accompany the ceremonies of the "Emperor of the Holy Ghost," the "Body of God and St. Anthony," &c., being scenes of the most flagrant licentiousness. These absurd and blasphemous ceremonies disgusted Southey with the character of the Church of Rome. The nature of his studies had also directed his atten-

tion to the history of their doctrines, to the lives and pretensions of their saints, and to the influence of their worship. To one whose eyes are open, the gross and unblushing violation of every law, human and divine, can so clearly be brought home to that church, that it is no wonder Southey felt then, and continued to feel to the end of his life, that no quarter should be given to a community holding such principles of duplicity; whose avowed faith is aggression, whose presumption absolves men from the guilt attached to the worst crimes, whose spirit is intolerant, and whose reign has been the triumph of the most abject and cruel tyranny.

During the summer Southey retired with his uncle to the cool and refreshing hills of Cintra, a town of small dimensions, consisting of a palace, a plaza or square, and a number of narrow, crooked streets, winding down the sides. Behind rose the Rock of Lisbon,—as it is termed by the sailors from the sea, or as it is designated by the inhabitants, the Mountain of Cintra,—broken into a number of pyramidal summits of rock piled upon rock, some covered with verdure, some ruggedly barren. On one hand stood the Penha convent, on the other the ruins of a Moorish castle. The road which ascended these heights formed a beautiful terrace, commanding a splendid and boundless prospect. The stony summits of the hills were succeeded by slopes, growing gradually more green and luxuriant as

they descended to the valley. The wild heath, with its purple blossom, clothed the open downs in a mantle of sapphire; whilst orange-groves, lemon-gardens, olive-plantations, and cork-trees, with the light clustering vine pendent from their branches, all bathed in the cloudless sunshine of the South, gave a lively and intense splendour to the beauty of the scene.

Southey found the conveniences of Cintra superior to what he had expected; yet here, occasionally, the absurdities of the government interfered with the comforts of the British residents. On one occasion in particular an order was issued that no Englishman should be served in the market until the Portuguese had been satisfied. This carried its own remedy. The foreigners were the chief supporters of the market, and the rule was obliged to be withdrawn. The English are always liberal, and this is soon discovered. Portuguese women seek out English families for service, as they obtain better wages, and because a Portuguese mistress feels herself bound to lock them up when she goes out, to prevent their intriguing with the men.*

In the February of 1801, Southey, his friend Mr. Waterhouse, and four ladies, commenced a circuitous excursion through the interior of the country, by Santarem and Torres Vedras. The accommodations on the

* The same precautions are taken by Levantine ladies in Egypt. See Mr. Bayle St. John's "Two Years' Residence in a Levantine Family."

road and at the inns at which they stopped were singularly, often ridiculously, inconvenient; but the beauty of the scenery and the interesting objects which different towns afforded sufficiently kept up the excitement and pleasure of the journey, and made amends in some degree for the discomforts which they experienced. At Pombal they saw Our Lady's oven, where annually a fire is kindled, a wafer baked, and a man, the Shadrach of the town, walks round the glowing furnace coming out unhurt and unsinged, by a special miracle of Our Lady of Cardal. At Thomar is a statue of St. Christopher on the bridge; three grains of its legs, taken in a glass of water, are a sovereign cure for the ague—and poor St. Christopher's supporters are almost worn out by the extent of the practice. Torres Vedras is the place where Father Anthony of the Wounds died,—a man suspected of sanctity. On one occasion the pious mob attacked his body, stripped it naked, cut off all his hair, and tore up his nails to keep for relics. Before Southey had proceeded far upon his journey, he was more than ever disgusted with the vile system of relics, images, and saintships, that kept alive the fires of superstition. In no country in the world are saints so numerous. One protects from a storm, another from fire, a third from the palsy, a fourth clears the clouds, and so on *ad infinitum*, where human infirmities bespeak the necessity of a superior and interposing power. A system for an enthusiast who can drown his reason and keep his feel-

ings alive. It is only by tracing the conduct of this religion in its native seats that we can arrive at its real features; and in Southey's writings we have ample pictures to enable us to judge of its true and unchanged nature.

On his return to Lisbon, Southey began to contemplate again visiting England. The state of the Continent made the residence of the English in Portugal insecure, and many, to avoid expulsion and the loss of their property, had resolved to seek safety in their native land. Southey, though reluctant to leave the beautiful sun and the magnificent scenery of Cintra, was still eager to join the homeward voyagers. His love of his native country, though damped by the anticipation of English taxes, English climate, and stale beer—his desire to see old faces and renew old friendships—rendered his return in every respect a pleasurable idea.

CHAPTER IX.

Return to England—Mr. Drummond—Keswick—Coleridge and Wordsworth—Cumberland Scenery—Secretaryship to the Chancellor of the Exchequer for Ireland—Celebrated Characters—Death of his Mother—Chatterton's Sister—Sir Herbert Croft—Birth of a Daughter—House-hunting—Literature.

ÆTAT. 27-29.

SOUTHEY, having completed his arrangements, returned to England and took up his residence once more at Bristol. He found that many changes had been wrought during his absence. His intimate friend Davy, who was for him one of its chief attractions, had left for the more ambitious circles of the metropolis; and many faces he expected would have welcomed him back, had disappeared altogether from the theatre of life.

His first object was to renew his connexions with the publishers; and in this he was so successful, that within a short time his hands were as fully employed as ever. He had not, however, changed his opinions

with respect to literary labour as a means of support, and now only regarded his resumption of it as temporary. By the exertions of his friend Wynn, a prospect of obtaining the office of secretary to Mr. Drummond, who was about to proceed as ambassador, first to Palermo and afterwards to the Ottoman Porte, was opened to him. This would have been a post peculiarly grateful to his temperament. The easy duties it entailed, the fixed salary which it afforded, though small, and the leisure it would give him to proceed with that which now constituted the great object of his thoughts—the History of Portugal—pointed it out as a situation peculiarly adapted for him. His residence abroad in the genial atmosphere of the South had created a discontent with English scenery, climate, and habits; and in his letters of this date he constantly disparages the natural beauties of his own country, by the unfavourable comparison he draws between it and the scenery around Lisbon. His friend, however, was not successful in his endeavours, and this was one more added to the list of disappointments which Southey in the course of his long life had to experience.

Coleridge was at this time residing at Greta Hall, near Keswick. In the neighbourhood Wordsworth was also living; and though the hills of this mountainous district intervened and interrupted their intercourse in winter, in summer a ramble across them was always delightful, and repaid by the hearty welcome and hos-

pitality with which the two poets greeted each other. An invitation from Coleridge to Southey induced him to take a trip with his wife down to Cumberland, which was protracted to a stay during the fall of the year.

With the scenery of the lakes Southey was at first disappointed. The reality fell short of that picture which he had sketched out in his own imagination, and the grandeur and the beauty of Skiddaw and Derwent-water "paled" before the images of his own invention. They lost, too, in the contrast, vivid in his own mind, of the warmer landscapes of Spain and Portugal. At length, however, the lakes expanded, the mountains enlarged themselves, and the whole scenery became more beautiful as he became more familiar with it. The effect grew upon him. The more he contemplated the picture, the more its peculiar features were brought out by an enthusiastic study of them; the more he became associated with them in heart and feeling, the more did their beauty become developed.

From Keswick, Southey diverged upon a visit to Mr. Wynn at Llanyedwin, the seat of that gentleman in Wales. Whilst here, he was informed that the secretaryship to the Chancellor of the Exchequer for Ireland had become vacant, and an offer of the situation for himself arrived by the same post from his friend John Rickman, at that time residing in Dublin. The salary was 350*l.* per annum, and the work light. Southey at once accepted the post, and returning for a few days to

Cumberland, lost no time in taking possession of his appointment.

On his arrival in the Irish capital he found that Mr. Corry, the chancellor, was absent in the country. This gave him what he calls a few days of "purportless idleness." It enabled him, however, to make many necessary preparations, to examine the principal parts of the city, and to learn something of the person whose secretary he was to be. "I like his character," he writes ; * "he does business well and with method, but loves amusement better than business, and books better than official papers."

After a short sojourn in Dublin, the duties of his office called Mr. Corry, for the winter season, to London, whither his secretary followed him, having made a hurried journey to Keswick to see Mrs. Southey. When returned to the metropolis, he was overwhelmed with the congratulations of his friends upon his recent appointment. Others, who had formerly taken no notice of him, were now among the foremost to hold out the right hand of fellowship, and welcome him with smiles of courtesy and respect. Neglect or coldness vanished in the sunshine of his fortune ; and had he measured his friendships by the multitude of his professed admirers, he might have considered himself the happiest of earth's sons. But such conduct to one who inquired

* Letter to Mrs. Southey, Oct. 1801.

deeply into human nature appeared contemptible, and made him think more despicably (such is his own expression)* of mankind than he could wish to do. "As if this were a baptism that purified me from all my sins—a regeneration; and the one congratulates me, and the other visits me, as if the author of 'Joan of Arc' and 'Thalaba' were made a greater man by scribbling for the Irish Chancellor of the Exchequer! However, by these symptoms," he adds, "I suppose my situation to be a good one."

The duties Southey had to perform are humorously described in a letter to his friend John Rickman, and consisted chiefly in making out a catalogue of books published since '97, on finance and scarcity; or in reading up the questions of the corn-laws, finance, and tithes: all which appears to have been light work. He did not, however, escape the satirical raillery to which public men and public officers are frequently exposed; and the popular journals of the day expressed a hope that the poet would make no *false numbers* in his new work, besides similar innuendoes and political bantering.

A new year had opened upon him, but its dawn was overcast by the clouds of affliction. On the 5th of January, his mother, who had joined him on his return from Ireland, and had been for some time in a declining state, expired. This, with the exception, perhaps, of

* Letter to Mr. Taylor of Norwich, November 1801.

the loss of his friend Edmund Seward, was the first sorrow he was doomed to know. In his earlier years he had experienced less of maternal care than most children of his class and station. But since his father's death he had contributed chiefly, if not altogether, to her support, and the piety and affection of a son seemed to thrive still stronger by its late maturity. Indeed, although he felt that he had been a source of much consolation to her, he discovered not until she was removed how deeply rooted his affection had sunk, or how dear a pang the separation would cost. She appears to have been a woman of most gentle and amiable disposition, too easily swayed by her imperious half-sister (the disparity of their ages may offer some excuse), and evincing great tenderness towards her children. She was only in her fiftieth year.

The next few months passed away in the discharge of his official duties, which were more nominal than real. His life is described at this period as undiversified by any other than the ordinary occurrence of a friend dropping in to-day and another to-morrow. Yet we have occasionally an announcement of "the growth of his history satisfying him;" by which we are led to infer that he was busy during his leisure hours upon it. Whilst still labouring under the depression of spirits caused by his mother's death, he determined upon a journey to Norwich, to visit Mr. William Taylor.

His mind was, however, unsettled. There were

many inconveniences attached to his new office which now began to make themselves felt. His heart yearned for domestic ease. The comfort of his own hearth was often sighed for. The constant change of place which his new office involved was unsuited to his tastes and former habits. In this mood he reflected upon the advantages and disadvantages of his post, and was balancing them in his mind, when Mr. Corry, it seems, thinking his time not sufficiently employed by the work he was enabled to supply him with, proposed to him the education of his sons ; but as this was not "in the bond," nor were his habits or inclinations adapted to such a responsibility, Southey declined the task, and shortly afterwards resigned his situation.

He now took up his abode once more at Bristol, and was soon deeply immersed in writing for the publishers. His "History of Portugal," also, engaged a considerable portion of his time. He also contracted with Messrs. Longman and Co. for the translation of "Amadis of Gaul," for which he was to receive 60*l.*, with a prospect of 40*l.*, and then 30*l.* more at future intervals, if the sale were favourable.

Amongst the many amiable features of Southey's character, none was more prominent than his willingness to relieve, in whatever shape it appeared, to the utmost of his power. This disposition will frequently be exemplified in the following pages ; but we have an instance now to relate which, whilst it exhibits his private

generosity, indicates his public sympathy. The sister and niece of the unfortunate Chatterton were in a state of extreme destitution, whilst the publishers of his works were reaping large and increasing profit from their sale. Feeling for the suffering relatives of the poet, and blushing for the disgrace that attached itself to his ungrateful country, which, whilst it rewarded and adored with a hero-worship the mighty slaughterers of mankind, allowed the kindred of him who adorned and benefited, not his own land alone, but the intelligence of the world, to languish in obscurity and want,—he determined to edit the whole of his works; and as there were aggravated cases of injustice towards this poor family, to lay them before the public for their benefit. This was purely a labour of love, and in it he was kindly assisted by Mr. Cottle.

Sir Herbert Croft, it appears, had obtained possession of the letters and MSS. of Chatterton from his sister, Mrs. Newton, on the condition of speedily returning them. They were, however, surreptitiously printed, and the only redress Mrs. Newton could obtain was a 10*l.* note. These facts Southey found means of introducing into the pages of the monthly magazines, and held up to the indignation of the country the conduct of Sir H. Croft. The result was a handsome subscription; and by the sale of the works edited by Southey, a sum of 800*l.* was handed over to the sister and niece.

In the September of this year, his first child (to whom he gave, in memory of her grandmother, the name of Margaret,) was born. This was an event ardently wished for and joyfully welcomed. It operated still more strongly upon his domestic feelings, and suggested the propriety of his settling in a permanent abode. Since his return from Portugal he had been wandering from one house to another, from this friend to that friend; and he had only selected Bristol as a temporary place of residence. A desire to be near London, the great centre of business, inclined him to regard Richmond as an eligible spot; but fearing that it was not sufficiently retired, and that its proximity to the metropolis might expose him to the interruption of frequent visitors, he determined to select a more distant home. Accordingly, he entered into negotiations for a house in the Vale of Neath, in Glamorganshire, one of the loveliest spots in Great Britain. Amongst the objects which he proposed to himself in choosing Wales for a place of residence, was the facility it might afford him of acquiring the Welsh language, which he was very desirous to learn. A disagreement, however, arising between himself and the landlord, upon some necessary improvements, the negotiations were broken off, and an idea that had for some time filled his mind with the most pleasurable anticipations remained unrealised.

He was, however, indefatigable in his literary labours, although a weakness in his eyes, which he feared

might terminate seriously, occasionally checked the energy of his natural enthusiasm. Longman and Hamilton were requiring his prose, whilst an engagement for supplying the "Morning Post" with a regular string of verses was still pending. Yet he found his chief amusement in being employed in literature, and his only regret was that the kind was not of his own choosing. Reviewing he always disliked; but had his path lain through old chronicles, and he himself allowed to compose from a full head at leisure, he would, he tells us, have aspired to no higher happiness.

CHAPTER X.

Fondness for the Past—The “Bibliotheca Britannica”—Death of his Daughter—Resides at Keswick—His Character—Literature—“Madoc”—Specimens of the Modern English Poets—Thoughts of visiting Portugal—Visit to Scotland—Edinburgh—Ashestiel—Walter Scott—Jeffrey and Brougham—Criticism and Reviews.

ÆTAT. 29–32.

IN his letters to his most intimate friends Southey poured forth his whole undisguised heart, expressed the fulness of his feelings, and told his hopes and disappointments with unrestricted confidence. It is in these that we trace the true features of his character, that we are enabled to arrive at the fountain-head of his sentiments, and pursue the course and current of his opinions. A lingering fondness for the past, for whatever wore the impress or assumed the air of the antique, had peculiar charms for his fancy, and not unfrequently fascinated and overruled his better judgment. “I love,” he writes to a friend,* “old houses best, for the sake of odd closets, and cupboards, and good thick

* Letter to Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq. April 1803.

walls that do not let the wind blow in ; and little out-of-the-way polyangular rooms, with great beams running across the ceiling—old heart of oak that has outlasted half-a-score of generations ; and chimneypieces with the date of the year carved above them ; and huge fire-places that warmed the shins of Englishmen before the House of Hanover came over. The most delightful associations that ever made me feel, and think, and fall a-dreaming, are excited by old buildings ; not absolute ruins, but in a state of decline. . . . In truth, I am more disposed to connect myself by sympathy with the ages that are past, and by hope with those that are to come, than to vex and irritate myself by any lively interest about the existing generations." The type and the antitype, the symbol and " the thing signified," are easily confounded in a mind so constituted ; nor should we be surprised to find that one who so fondly cherished old feudal and despotic relics should insensibly be averse to change and reformation in the civil and religious institutions of his own country.

In the July of 1803 Southey was again in London. The object of this present visit was to negotiate with Messrs. Longman and Co. the publication, on a very extensive scale, of a history of British literature. The work was to be bibliographical, biographical, and critical, and entitled the "*Bibliotheca Britannica*." One portion was to be devoted to the pure and native productions of the Welsh writers ; another to include

English poets and poetry, and prose really poetical, consisting of such great names as have either formed epochs in our taste, or such, at least, as are representations. A third would be dedicated to English prose, considered as to style, as to eloquence, as to general impressiveness; a history of style and manners, their causes, their birthplaces, their parentage, their analysis.* A fourth would contain an account of metaphysics, theology, medicine, alchemy, law, and ethics, from Alfred to the present day. Another would embrace articles on all the separate arts and sciences that have been treated of in books since the Reformation. All these subjects were to be arranged chronologically, and the distribution of the whole—in fact, the entire editing this encyclopædia, was to be intrusted to Southey. Of those who were to be associates in this great literary undertaking, the chief were, the well-known Anglo-Saxon historiographer Sharon Turner, Messrs. Rickman, Taylor (of Norwich), Duppa, and Coleridge,—men with whom he was well acquainted, and upon whose co-operation in such a work he could confidently depend. The universal panic which seized the nation at this time, however, affected also the interests of literature. The publishers were reluctant to risk their capitals on so extensive an undertaking, and deemed it prudent to wait until a more favourable change had

* Letter of Coleridge to Southey: "Life and Correspondence of Southey," vol. ii. p. 218.

taken place in the trade of the country. This postponement proved fatal to the work.

The death of his infant daughter, which took place about this time, overshadowed for a while the happiness of Southey. So severely did he feel the loss, that he was eager to quit Bristol; and that city, which had been to him the scene of so many enjoyments, now seemed the centre of gloom and affliction, and haunted with the presence of his child. He accordingly hastened down to Keswick, where he once more joined the domestic circle of Coleridge. "I was glad to hear from you," he writes to his brother, Lieutenant Southey: "a first letter after such a loss is expected with some sort of fear; it is like pulling off the bandage that has been put upon a green wound." Such is the forcible expression by which he reveals how painful the reference to his lost daughter still was.

The scenery of Cumberland now took a strong hold upon his imagination. Beauties which were slow in revealing themselves before, now thickened upon him. As Portugal receded from his memory, Keswick grew upon his affections. "Would you could see these lakes and mountains," he writes, shortly after his arrival; "how wonderful they are! how awful in their beauty!" He was now thirty years of age, of a light and cheerful disposition, but keenly sensitive to the influences of external nature, which gave to his thoughts a sombre colouring—a colouring that often attends

upon intensity of feeling and reflection, and indicates rather a calmness of spirit than a gloominess of character. Yet he carried not these feelings into society, nor even into the circle of his family and friends. The sunshine of his humour cast a light about his presence; he was ever more ready to excite mirth and merriment than to extinguish it: in his ordinary intercourse with the world he was warm and generous; kindness and affection marked his conduct towards those he loved. A dimness of sight occasionally warned him of the possibility (we cannot bring ourselves to believe in the probability of misfortune) that he might altogether lose it. But he relaxed not his diligence; he rather laboured the more abundantly, whilst the power was given him, that he might have more food for reflection should the night overtake him.

The History was progressing favourably, and "Maddoc" in preparation for the press, which Southey hoped to bring it out by subscription. He was anxious to devote as much leisure as he could spare to the furtherance of his great work. But the necessities of home interfered, and he was compelled to devote much time to periodical writing. This divided attention was injurious to him in a pecuniary point of view,—for had he regarded "pen-and-inkmanship" as a trade, and had he been willing to give himself up to writing short articles and reviews, the only branch that was remunerative, he might have gained double the amount he did.

"I have more in hand than Buonaparte or Marquis Wellesley,"* he thus facetiously describes his engagements,—“digesting Gothic law, gleaning moral history from monkish legends, and conquering India with Albuquerque; filling up the chinks of the day by hunting in Jesuit chronicles and compiling ‘*Collectanea Hispanica et Gothica*.’ Meantime, ‘Madoc’ sleeps, and my love of gain. Compilation† goes on at night, when I am fairly obliged to lay history aside, because it perplexes me in my dreams. ’Tis a vile thing to be pestered in sleep with all the books I have been reading in the day jostled together.”

A short journey to London, to superintend the publication of one of his works now ready to issue from the press, interrupted for a while the even tenor of his duties. “*Amadis de Gaul*,” a translation from the Spanish, had already appeared; and “*Madoc*,” a poem founded upon a legend of a Welsh emigration to Mexico before the discovery of America by Columbus, was now placed in the hands of Messrs. Ballantyne and Co. Considering its ponderous size—it was a quarto—this was one of the most favourably received of Southey’s larger poems, nearly one-half the edition being sold in little more than a month. After its appearance, however, he regretted that it was of such formidable dimensions, instead of a more agreeable and readable shape. Its

* Letter to J. Rickman, March 1804.

† Specimens of the English Poets.

high price, he was willing to believe, condemned one-half the edition to be unheeded in large libraries, and the other to be regarded as lumber in the gloomy recesses of the publishers' warehouse. By this time, so assiduous was he, that his "Specimens of the later English Poets," for the collection and arrangement of which he had engaged with Messrs. Longman and Co. shortly before, was so far completed as to be ready for the printer's hand. It embraced all those who had died from 1685 to 1800. He was also engaged in a corrected republication of his best pieces from the "Anthology," and anxious to enter upon an edition of the works of Sir Philip Sidney.

His great work, however, and that which filled his principal thoughts, for which he read the most extensively, collated the most elaborately, and over which he pondered the most studiously, was his "History of Portugal." It is true, that he devoted but such time as he could spare from more immediately important labours, but his progress was not slow. If his other subjects were engaged in *con amore*—and he confesses, however distasteful a subject might be at first, it grew upon him until he wrote with his whole heart—this was truly a labour of love. He had exhausted the materials that lay at his command in England, and anxiously looked forward to again visiting those kingdoms whose annals he was elucidating. The soft and genial climate of the South invoked, with many a recollection, his spirit to a return, and frequently the spell was strong upon him.

Whilst, on the one hand, he placed the society, connexions, and all the associations which the name of one's own country raise up; on the other hand he remembered the delightful sensation—the perfect exhilaration of the animal spirits—which he enjoyed in the cool groves of Cintra. He remembered the pleasure that is excited in those sunny climes by the mere act of breathing, and, in addition to those incentives, the beauty of the scenery of the Tagus, the Siesia de Ossa, and Coimbra, came upon him with powerful effect.

So fully expectant was Southey of being able to put this wish into execution, that he regarded his residence at Keswick as only temporary. Coleridge had left some time before, and gone to the Mediterranean. Southey, seeking a settled habitation, had taken it off his hands; but now an immediate prospect of leaving England seemed to open upon him. The Government—it appears he gathered his information from the newspapers—was about to prepare an expedition for Lisbon, and the office of Inspector of Accounts had not yet been filled up. As this was a civil post, and the obtainment of it might serve him in collecting further materials for his history, Southey determined to apply for it; and his friend Grosvenor Bedford exerted his influence with the authorities of the Admiralty. The scheme was, however, ultimately abandoned.

During the autumn of this year (1805) Southey laid aside his pen and books, and in company with his friend,

the Rev. Peter Elmsley (afterwards Principal of St. Alban's Hall, Oxford), made a tour to Edinburgh. After having visited the Castle, and other venerable and romantic spots in this modern Athens, he proceeded, a pilgrim of the Muses, to Ashestiel. There he was received with great warmth and cordiality by Walter Scott, who was always remarkable for his spirit of hospitality. With him he remained a few days. There can be imagined no pleasure greater than the occasional reunion of two highly intellectual minds, the current of whose feelings and thoughts flowed in the same direction. With Sir Walter, Southey held many things in common. Their tastes, their pursuits, were frequently similar. Legendary tales, eccentric romances, antiquated novelets and quaint poems, possessed especial charms for each; and in their political opinions there was little diversity, whilst their hearts were open and liberal to the claims and offices of friendship. Hence we are not surprised that this visit was the source of great mutual pleasure, and cemented more strongly the bond of that intimacy which had already existed for some time.

In Edinburgh, Southey was thrown into the company of the well-known editor and critic, Jeffrey, and of Henry Brougham. Their intimate connexion with the "Edinburgh Review," and the severity of the strictures which had appeared upon his poems, and which were generally understood to be from the pen of the former, prevented the meeting from being very cordial. In his letters

Southey expresses, in unequivocal terms, the feelings with which he greeted them, and the contempt he entertained for their superficial knowledge. The further result of this journey may be summed up in his own characteristic words :* " I am returned with much pleasant matter for remembrance; well pleased with Walter Scott—with Johnny Armstrong's castle on the Esk—with pleasant Teviotdale—with the Tweed and the Yarrow—astonished at Edinburgh—delighted with Melrose—sick of Presbyterianism, and, above all things, thankful that I am an Englishman and not a Scotchman."

Southey and the critics—we may almost say, the whole press—during a great portion of his life, were at variance. The conceits and affectations of style which he introduced into his poems incurred their severe reprobation, and the political views he subsequently enunciated were too little in accordance with the feelings and opinions of the public writers of the times to allow them to be expressed without the bitterest comments. The influence they were known to carry with them still further inflamed the severity of his opponents. Hence he altogether eschewed their judgment, and affected a total disregard and disrespect: it was the *as triplex* of the practice of criticism. He ever maintained that reviewing was an immoral occupation, unless the reviewer had as much knowledge as the writer upon whom

* Letter to Grosvenor Bedford, Nov. 1805.

he sat in judgment. This censure was doubtless provoked by the unfavourable reception "Madoc" had met with amongst the reviewers, whose power he is compelled to acknowledge in the depressed sale of his poems, and whose motives he most unjustly attacks. The praise he had for "Amadis," he attributed, not to the merit of the performance, but to the idea that a translation could excite no envy, whereas he presumed that those who were aspiring to be poets were jealous of his genius, and sought to detract from his reputation by maliciously criticising his poems. In such passages as these we perceive the prevailing fault of Southey's character,—an overweening estimation of his powers as a poet.

CHAPTER XI.

Cumberland—The Lakers—Change of Ministry—Expectations
—Death of his Uncle, John Southey—Pension—Literature
—European Politics—History of Brazil—Kirke White—Literature—Letter to Grosvenor Bedford.

ÆTAT. 32-34.

IN the last chapter, we left Southey desirous of quitting England; in the present, we shall find him determinately fixed at Keswick. The fondness with which he became attached by association to the places he had made his home, acted upon his spirit with a centripetal force. The magnitude also of his library, the removal of which would now have been a formidable labour, became another and an increasing argument for his retention at the foot of Skiddaw. Cintra and its orange-groves, Portugal and his History, would frequently allure him to other shores; but circumstances more potent than the fondest day-dreams continued to retain him at Keswick, and here he resided for the remainder of his long life.

It must be confessed that this spot was in every way

a desirable residence for him. The grand and beautiful in nature were not only recreations for his mind—they were feasts upon which his imagination could feed. His heart was already attached to the scenery of Cumberland: he loved its tall and rugged mountains; he loved their deep shades and verdant valleys; he loved to gaze upon the waters of the picturesque Derwentwater spread out beneath him, of Bassenthwaite in the distance, and on the verdure of their steep banks, visible as these objects were from the windows of his study. In the purple flush of morning—in the dazzling effulgence of noon—in the golden radiance of evening, the soft halo of twilight, or the meek splendour of moonlight—by spring, by summer, by autumn, by winter, he might watch their changing beauties, and derive fresh inspiration from every glance.

He was fond of retirement; but this spirit rather defended him from the intrusion of injudicious companions, who might interrupt his time, to him all-valuable, than barred the avenues of his house against his friends. In the autumn, numerous visitors repair to the lake districts: it was at such times that Southey relaxed his assiduous labours. Indeed, had he been willing to continue them, the continual inroads made upon his application by persons bringing letters of introduction, or desirous of seeing a man whose literary reputation was rising, would have rendered it impossible for him to have devoted himself seriously to his work.

But it was with him a source of the greatest gratification to receive those who came upon such occasions. Strangers from all parts of the world, poets, politicians, philosophers, and artists, were the guests of his hospitality; and his enjoyment at such seasons was perfect, if an old and attached friend found his way to Keswick. He had begun to love his hills and his lakes, and it was with peculiar pride that he used to exhibit the grand natural beauties of Cumberland to their best advantage. A landscape depends much upon the point from which it is viewed, and even upon the light shed over it. Hence it is that travellers and tourists frequently fail to perceive those brilliant phases in a living picture which afford such exquisite delight to the inhabitants of the vicinity, and those conducted by well-informed guides. Southey was experienced in this. Having studied the characteristics of the mountains and valleys in his own neighbourhood, he was well fitted to counsel—which he did heartily—those who came to view and admire the beauties of the lake scenery. He advised them what path to pursue—what pass to gain—from what rock to expect the most expansive scene—in what valley the most charming nook—in what defile the most picturesque foss or waterfall, and from what point the most sublime prospect. On some occasions he would act as guide, and scramble up the rugged steeps of the hills; at others, he joined parties of pleasure, and selecting an eligible spot, which was always recommended

by its beauty, spent the day in the revels and exhilarating influence of a pic-nic. Into these scenes he would enter with all the buoyancy of youth, and with all the exuberance of spirits of a child. He ever loved to see the faces of those around him redolent with happiness, and he strove to add mirth to their innocent sports. Eyes beaming with smiles and gladness usually attended him on such occasions, as it was his nature to infuse the lightness of his own heart into the hearts of those who constituted the company; and seldom was it the case that all did not participate equally in the joy which he endeavoured to diffuse.

During the other seasons of the year his life was little varied. Each day brought with it the same routine of duty, which was executed with undeviating assiduity. From breakfast until dinner-time he was to be found in his study, reading and taking notes, or writing. This time was particularly devoted to his correspondence, which of itself was no trifling occupation. A walk from three to four, if the weather permitted, served the purposes of recreation and health. From dinner until tea the claims of publishers and reviewers kept his pen steadily and incessantly employed, and from that time until it was the hour of rest he was engaged in light and familiar reading or conversation with his family. In his library a favourite cat—for Southey was fond of domestic animals—was his constant companion. This monotony was only broken

by the arrival of a parcel of books, at which time his spirits were quickened with intense delight. "Talk of the happiness of getting a great prize in the lottery!" he writes to Coleridge; "what is that to the opening a box of books? The joy upon lifting up the cover must be something like that we shall feel when Peter the Porter opens the door and says, 'Please to walk in, sir.'" Study was with Southey its own reward; and in a multiplicity of literary engagements he found his most cherished happiness. "That I shall never be paid for my labour," continues this letter, "according to the current of time and labour, is tolerably certain; but if any one should offer me 10,000*l.* to forego the labour, I should bid him go to the devil, for twice the sum could not purchase me half the enjoyment."

There are few persons that have had such apparently favourable chances in the lottery of life, who have drawn so few prizes as Southey. Linked to a pursuit (periodical writing) from which he was constantly devising means of extricating himself—enjoying the intimate friendship of many closely connected with the Government, from whose voluntary exertions he was daily anticipating some permanent benefit—holding no unreasonable expectation of sharing in a property of a hundred thousand pounds, he was subject to perpetual disappointments.

Upon the death of Pitt, when Fox and the Gren-

villes came into office, his friend Wynn obtained the post of Under-Secretary of State in the Home Office. Such was the attachment of this gentleman to Southey, that he not only allowed him an annuity, but had frequently, in conjunction with Mr. G. C. Bedford, used his influence in his behalf for vacant situations, though his kindness was usually defeated by their being incompatible with his tastes and pursuits. It was naturally expected that his recent accession to power would give him a wider scope in which to serve his friend, as well as increased facilities; whom he was willing to serve, not for the sake of friendship alone, but for the higher cause, the advancement of literature. He was sensible how great a service would be rendered to civilisation at large, were the "History of Portugal," embracing as it intended so large a portion of the history of the Papal Church, given to the world. Others entertained the same view, and amongst them Lord Holland was desirous that such a situation should be procured for Southey as would enable him to proceed with his grand work, exempt from the harassing interruptions which necessarily were the result of dependence for his daily bread upon the daily exertions of his pen and brain. With this view, a secretaryship of legation, or the consulship at Lisbon, whichever became vacant first, was to be given to him. So high did his confidence rise upon the occasion, that, writing to his friend

Duppa, he says, "My reviewing is this day* finished for ever and ever. Amen. Our fathers of the Row† will, I dare say, wish me to continue at the employment; but I am weary of it. Seven years have I been, like Sir Bevis, preying upon 'rats and mice,' and such small deer, and for the future will fly at better game. It is best to choose my own subjects." The difficulty, however, of controlling such an appointment was quickly experienced, and writing and reviewing became again the necessary duty of his existence.

Whilst this hope was pending, his uncle, the inheritor of the Cannon estates, died, leaving the whole of it, two thousand excepted, which he disposed of in legacies, to his brother, a man of vulgar habits and a harsh disposition. Although Southey had expected a remembrance in the will of his late relative, he had a better right to look forward to a legacy at the death of the survivor; yet such was the caprice of his temper, that, in a letter, Southey expresses it as his conviction that the property would be more probably left to his brother (Lieut. Southey) than to himself, for the name's sake; but not that it would be left out of the family.

The situations which would have best suited him to carry out his History were reserved for persons of more influence, and who had larger family connexions; yet he was not without hopes that something would be found

* Feb. 23, 1806.

† Messrs. Longman and Co. Paternoster Row.

which would eventually render him independent of the publishers. Many reasons made it a matter of delicacy as well as urgency. The expenses of his household had considerably increased, and drew largely upon his time and labour, so that the studies which he was most desirous of pursuing were necessarily kept in abeyance. The pension, too, which had been granted so liberally by Mr. Wynn, he was unwilling to continue. When the offer was first made his friend was a single man, his expenses were few, and he had only himself to consult. Now, however, he had become married, his establishment was increased, the position which he held in the political world proportionably augmented his expenditure; and the circumstances under which the annuity was bestowed, and those which affected his benefactor, now he felt were not equal. Anxious, therefore, to avail himself of the frequently-repeated kindness of his friend, who pressed him to name some other situation, Southey suggested: "When you have it in your power, let the one thing you seek for me be the office of Historiographer, with a decent pension. If 300*l.*, it would satisfy my wishes; if 400*l.*, I should be rich. I have no worldly ambition; a man who lives so much in the past, and so little in the future, can have none."

The office of Historiographer, however, did not present itself for his acceptance; but the Registrarship of the Vice-admiralty Court in St. Lucia was proposed to him, with a salary of 600*l.* per annum, or the alterna-

tive of a pension of 200*l.* per annum. The choice was not left to Southey's decision. The Grenville ministry being required to give into the king a written acknowledgment that they would not introduce any measure tending to Catholic toleration or emancipation, they felt it their duty to resign, and this with such expedition, that no time was left for Southey's answer to arrive. However, his friend wisely selected for him that which seemed most compatible with his tastes and habits, and left him at liberty to pursue his own course. The annuity, however, when all fees were deducted, amounted to no more than 144*l.* This pension must be regarded as the act of private friendship, and altogether unconnected with political considerations. In this light Southey viewed it, and in this light accepted it.

To make up the deficiencies of his income, he now engaged to supply the lives of Spanish and Portuguese authors in the remaining volumes of Dr. Aikin's "General Biography;" a task for which he was well competent, from his intimate acquaintance with the literature of those two countries. He also sent "Espriella's Letters" to the press, and was busy on the "History of the Cid." His generous sympathy with affliction led him also into a curious correspondence with his publishers. A person labouring under mental depression, if not debility, found some relief in writing verses and imagining himself a poet. From composition he aspired to publication; and nothing could satisfy his mania but

an application, through Southey, to Messrs. Longman and Co., to undertake the task of giving them to the world. Southey, with his usual good-nature, wrote to the publishers on his behalf, though he could not but detail the painful circumstances under which he applied. The result was as might be expected. The firm consisted of men of business, and as the publication of such a book would be at variance with all strict rules, they naturally declined.

After much labour and much research—after having, with indefatigable energy, digested the materials which were to compose his "History of Portugal," Southey had determined to divide it into the following sections, and to pursue and publish them in regular succession as separate works. The first, which comprehended the history of Portugal in Europe, was to be comprised in three volumes; an equal number were to contain the annals of the empire of Portugal in the East; whilst the histories of Brazil, and of the Jesuits in Japan, the literary history of Spain and Portugal, and the history of Monachism, each subject constituting a complete work, were to fill another six or seven volumes. But the recent events upon the Continent induced him to alter this arrangement. The brilliant successes of Bonaparte, which had subjected central Europe to his imperious tyranny, now threatened to overturn the Spanish monarchy; and the blow which struck at the independence of Spain menaced the independence of

Portugal. As the language of invasion became more loud, and the danger more imminent, the importance of the Portuguese possessions in America rose in proportion. To those vast and neglected territories, stretching from the Marañon to the Rio de la Plata, from the South Atlantic to the mountains of Peru and Bolivia, the eyes of Europe, and especially the court of Lisbon, were turned. Equal to two hundred kingdoms of similar dimensions with Portugal, this colossal colony had suffered from the injustice which the policy of both these Peninsular governments pursued towards their distant and dependent empires. So little were the advantages of this country understood—or, rather, so studious was the Cortez to repress and destroy every native energy and power, that the world was kept comparatively ignorant of its extent, character, condition, and resources.

Taking advantage of the excitement created by the aspect of European politics, Southey determined to turn to good account his own knowledge upon a subject of which it was confessed so few had any real and certain knowledge. Accordingly, deviating from his original plan, he hastened forward that portion of his work which included the history of Brazil. Not only was he master of information on South American affairs possessed by few, but, by the aid of his uncle, the Rev. Herbert Hill, was enabled to seek it in sources only known to one or two. This information Southey

was advised to communicate to the Government, and to express his readiness to proceed to Lisbon on this specific business, if they should consider the matter sufficiently important.

Time has frequently been compared to money, and the fitness of the comparison is obvious to every intelligent mind. To Southey's life the similitude is especially applicable. Necessary labour filled up the greater portion of his day, and the interval was devoted to that labour which he hoped would crown his extraordinary exertions with a permanent and lasting fame. Yet he was ever ready to assist his friends, or even strangers, with a portion of his invaluable time. He never was rich, scarcely ever had anything to spare, yet his bounty was liberal, and his generosity, though taxed to the uttermost, warm. An instance of this was given in the promptitude with which he set himself to place before the public the poverty of Mrs. Newton and her niece, and the interest which he took in procuring subscriptions for the widow of Robert Lovell. Southey now undertook a not dissimilar task.

A volume of poems had lately appeared, which exhibited a pure style, a feeling heart, and a fervent imagination. This volume had been treated with undue severity by the critics of the "Monthly Review," which called from the author a letter, detailing the circumstances under which they were written and published. This letter was accidentally seen by Southey,

and he at once understood the unjust harshness of the treatment. In consequence of this he wrote to Kirke White, for such was the name of the poet, giving him encouragement, lest he should be disheartened by the critique, and suggested that though it was imprudent in young persons generally to hasten the publication of their immature reflections, his circumstances seemed to justify his conduct; advised him to prepare a larger volume, to be brought out by subscription, and voluntarily offered to exert all the influence he had to assist him in the undertaking. This offer was not, however, accepted at the time; and, with a grateful acknowledgment of Southey's kindness, all further communication was broken off; whilst Kirke White's entrance at Cambridge turned his mind, alas! too intensely to more severe and consuming studies.

"'T was thine own Genius gave the final blow,
And help'd to plant the wound that laid thee low.
So the struck eagle, stretched upon the plain,
No more through rolling clouds to soar again,
Viewed his own weapon on the fatal dart,
And winged the shaft that quivered in his heart.
Keen were his pangs, but keener far to feel
He nursed the pinion that impelled the steel:
While the same plumage that had warmed his nest
Drank the last life-drop of his bleeding breast."*

In the October of 1806 Kirke White died; destroyed by too close an application to his academical course,

* English Bards and Scotch Reviewers.

acting upon a keenly sensitive temperament and a debilitated constitution.

Upon his decease the papers which he had left were put into Southey's hands by his brother, Mr. Neville White, to undergo an examination as to their literary value. The result of this supervision was an offer on the part of Southey to edit the poems, and write a memoir of the author, which he felt would be exceedingly interesting, as well as highly useful, in a moral view, to future students, whether ambitious of scholastic or literary honours. When he was asked what matter would be most suited for biographical notices, Southey wrote to Mr. Neville White, in the most energetic manner, to leave nothing concealed. He considered the example of such a youth winning his way in the midst of great difficulties, yet preserving his ambition unsullied by any dishonourable action, excelling in piety and industry, and with a holy confidence in his genius, so eminent, that the fullest and most ample account should be given to the world. The friends of White complied with Southey's wishes, and such was his exertions that in little more than a month the work was ready for the press; and to the sincere gratification of himself and others—admirers of genius—the first edition went off in less than three months, realising a considerable sum for the benefit of the mother and sister of the unfortunate poet.

The indefatigable pen of Southey was ever at work,

yet he was always cheerful in the midst of his labours. His necessities were great, and he was only desirous that his exertions should be proportionate to his wants. The works which he has accomplished—and there were not many that he undertook that he did not complete—exhibit an astonishing monument of human industry; and if those subjects were included which he suggested, and was desirous of carrying out, we must be surprised at the immense extent of his reading, the exhaustless treasures of his understanding, and the unwearied energy of his mind. The “*Bibliotheca Britannica*” which he proposed, though not executed, was a project which required vast research and a varied mass of critical erudition, and under his control would have made a valuable addition to our literature.

The field of his present labours included “*The History of Brazil*,” “*The Chronicle of the Cid*,” “*The Curse of Kehama*,” “*Espriella’s Letters*,” and a Preface for his “*Specimens of the Modern English Poets* ;” to which we might add “*Morte d’Arthur*,” which he proposed to edit with copious notes, and a volume of “*Travels in Portugal*,” which he suggested to his publishers. It might be inquired, with much reason, how one head and one brace of hands contrived to execute so large and diversified a task? Southey has himself left an explanation and answer. “*Do not bid me*,” he writes to his friend, Grosvenor Bedford, “do one thing at a time—no, nor two neither ; and it is only by

doing many things that I contrive to do so much ; for I cannot work long together at anything without hurting myself, and so I do everything by heats : then by the time I am tired of one, my inclination for another is come round."

Yet, while he was cheerfully intent upon a complication of works, the mind of Southey was not free from those embarrassments which, more than anything, ruffle the smooth and easy current of one's existence. He was anxious at this time to go up to London, but this gratification depended upon his finances. Looking over his accounts, he found that the profits from the current edition of the "Letters of Espriella," and the unborn one of the "Cid," had already been appropriated. On the hope that a new and small edition of "Madoc," of "Palmerin," and the "Specimens of Modern English Poets," would bring him in the sum of 100*l.* at the end of a year, he vaguely hopes to be set afloat again. Reviewing, however, was his staple means of subsistence, and by this he was enabled to meet the ordinary expenses of his household.

A disappointment of rather an unbusiness-like character also affected his pecuniary affairs at this time. Smirke had projected a splendid edition of "Don Quixote" with Cadell and Davies, and proposed to Messrs. Longman and Co. to take a share in it. They were also authorised by him to ask Southey to translate it. Whilst the negotiations were still pending, the Scotch

publishers struck a bargain with a Mr. Balfour, and placed the translation in his hands. Southey considered this treatment unhandsome in the highest degree, as did also Messrs. Longman and Co., who at once withdrew from any share in the publication.

Though his affairs seemed in a bad train, yet Southey was ever confident in his abilities, and cheerful in the performance of his duties. He only hoped for health. And this blessing his, he felt as though he could defy any attempts of adversity to overthrow his happiness.

CHAPTER XII.

Disagreement between the Editor and Proprietors of the "Edinburgh Review"—Overtures to Southey—Continental Politics—Sir Walter Scott withdraws from the "Edinburgh Review"—"The Quarterly Review"—Engagement of Southey on it—Gifford and his Contributors.

ÆTAT. 34-35.

A DIFFERENCE having sprung up about this time between the editor of the "Edinburgh Review" (Jeffrey) and the proprietors (Messrs. Longman and Co.), the latter applied to Southey to furnish reviews "in his best manner," intending to transfer the editorial department from that celebrated critic. His answer is characteristic of his sincerity. "I will review the books as soon as they arrive, and as well as I can; but I cannot do them better for an Edinburgh Review than for an Annual Register." This anticipated connexion with a periodical which eventually attacked him so bitterly was broken off; but he was shortly after invited to join the ranks of its contributors in a more friendly manner.

Sir Walter Scott was at this time closely associated with the principal writers of this northern Review, and had some considerable influence upon it. Wishing to be of service to Southey, and thinking that his connexion with it might be beneficial to him in a pecuniary point of view, as well as by giving a wider scope for his energies, he wrote to him, delicately offering some space in that periodical. Sir Walter took occasion to remark upon the severity of the criticisms upon "Madoc" and "Thalaba," which had appeared in the "Edinburgh Review," attributing it rather to Jeffrey's want of taste in poetry than any mal-appreciation of Southey's talents, or want of respect for his person on the part of the reviewer. He also hinted that considerations of a personal nature should not prevent his accepting the proposal, if he felt so disposed. The same letter communicated Scott's intention of publishing a small edition of the "Morte d'Arthur," a work which Southey had already engaged to prepare for the press.

The answer which the latter returned to this kind proposal expresses his obligation to its author for the good-will evinced therein towards himself, and the general grounds of his incapacity to join the Review; but the tone in which he speaks of Jeffrey indicates strongly that he had not forgotten, and it was hard to forget, the "*pert*" things that had been said against his poems by the Caledonian critic. His declaration, that he scarcely had one opinion in "common with the

Review," was true. Whilst Jeffrey was for peace, he was for war—the one was for Catholic emancipation, the other against it—and though the liberty of following his own opinions independently was apparently given, yet Southey felt that every individual article must be influenced by the Review as a whole, and derive a merit from the authority of all the rest. Upon these grounds, and others of a more personal nature, he declined the offer, although it might have added a hundred pounds, or double that amount, to his income.

The political events which agitated the Continent in the year 1808 were of the greatest importance, and fraught with the utmost anxiety to the British Government. The rapid successes of Napoleon Bonaparte, an enemy "against whom the faith that holds the moral elements of the world together was no protection," filled the minds of the English with just apprehensions. Having disregarded the treaties which were framed for the security and independence of Europe—having annexed Italy, Belgium, and Prussia to his dominions—having made Austria his vassal and Russia his ally—this insolent conqueror menaced even Britain itself with the preparations of an invasion. Not content with this, his ambition had overrun Spain with his armies—substituted a spurious sovereign on the throne of Charles V., and, pursuing his conquests, had driven into exile the members of the royal house of Braganza. The only power capable of sustaining or repelling his inundating

forces was Great Britain. With indomitable courage she had maintained her position against the repeated assaults of an enemy flushed with unclouded fortune, and issuing forth at length into the open field checked the presumptuous pride of victory. The convention which was signed at Cintra, and signalised the success of the British army, excited, and justly, the most indignant murmurs and discontent in this country. The terms upon which the French were allowed to escape, appeared not only inadequate to the superiority which we had gained over them, but disgraceful to the nation. Nevertheless, the "Edinburgh Review" pursued a peace policy, and used all its arguments and influence to dissuade the people from prosecuting the Peninsular War. Southey,—who had anxiously watched the progress of events, and, in common with many others, dreaded that the fall of these two countries would be the signal of active operations against the British Isles,—was urgent for the strongest and most decided measures being taken against the enemy, whilst yet the battle could be fought and the event resolved on foreign shores. For nearly two centuries England had been exempt from the calamities of fire and sword; and the only means by which the havoc could be warded off, and peace and tranquillity maintained at home—so it appeared to them—was by preventing this military despot from making himself master of Spain and Portugal.

It was at this period that a proposal was made to

Southey which had a great influence upon his future life, and brought him forward into political prominence. It also fixed him irrevocably to a labour for which he had so frequently expressed his distaste, and from which he always hoped to emancipate himself.

Sir Walter Scott, who had so lately urged Southey to lend his critical assistance to the "Edinburgh," now himself disapproved of the strong liberal tendency of several of its articles, and thought proper to withdraw from it entirely. Withholding his assent from its principles, he was also anxious to enunciate his own and those of the party whose sentiments coincided with his. He therefore resolved to establish another Review, that should, by the quality of its criticism, attract some of that attention which Jeffrey and his corps had engrossed. This desire quickly suggested the "Quarterly Review," and Southey was invited to contribute. As the principles of this Review approximated so nearly to his own, he hesitated not to accept the offer; and so closely did his connexion with it become, that for nearly forty years, and till within a short period of his death, he was one of its most able and important supporters.

How readily he would enter into such a scheme may further be imagined from the strong feelings with which he regarded the politics of the "Edinburgh," and his aversions to the opinions and tastes, if not of the person, of its editor. "I am ready, desirous and

able, to take part in this Review," was his immediate reply; but when it was proposed to him to prepare a paper upon the political aspect of Spain, a subject in which he had long taken a deep interest, and which, of all others, it appeared to his friends he was most capable of writing, he shrank from the proposition, and would have excused himself from taking any share in the *politics* of the Review.

He had no objection to review books of travels and voyages, biographies, and even histories, for which he felt himself, as he expresses it, entirely competent; but for politics, he despised all parties too much to belong to any. He was for continuing the war against Bonaparte as the only security of the kingdom; he knew too well the influence of Catholicism in the south of Europe, and therefore objected to further concessions to it in England; he felt the necessity of reform, and professed himself a warm supporter of the Church of England.

These are the principles upon which his political system was at this time founded — the creed which he thinks it necessary to confess in defence of his independence of opinion, whilst intimating his desire and readiness to enter upon the new Review, of which Gifford was to guide the helm. It was not to be subject to the views of others, or to have his own principles controlled, that he would engage in this new literary labour. He required that what he wrote should be the

expression of his own judgment and convictions upon the subject submitted to his reviewing ; and so sensitive was he upon this point, that when it occurred to him, ministerial influence might bear upon the opinions promulgated in the "Quarterly Review," he states at once his decision : — "I am very willing to travel with them as far as we are going the same way, and when our roads separate, shall, of course, leave them."

One of the principal causes of grievance that Southey had to complain of during the connexion of Mr. Gifford with this Review, was the license with which his articles were pruned and altered. It is understood that a certain control shall be exercised over a periodical by the person to whom its management is entrusted ; and to give consistency and character to the whole, such a power is requisite. But it appears that this prerogative was exercised with considerable absolutism by the Tory editor ; and not sentences alone were revised, and weakened by the revision, but, by the omission or transposition of words, Southey was made to express opinions diametrically opposed to his own views. With his first article he leaves this injunction : — "Now I wish you* would ask Mr. Gifford, if he thinks it expedient to use the pruning-knife, to let the copy be returned to me when the printer has done with it, because it is ten to one that the passages he would curtail,

* Grosvenor C. Bedford.

— being the most Southeyish of the whole — would be those that I should like best myself; and, therefore, I would have the satisfaction of putting them in again for my own satisfaction, if for nobody's else." This appeal, however, was vain. Frequently did he resent the violation, whether intentional or accidental, of many of his favourite passages and most approved opinions. Probably the distance at which he lived from town made his applications and menaces equally disregarded. The injustice of such conduct, and also the remedy, are obvious; and, probably, Southey, to assert his independence, would have quitted the Review, had he not continually anticipated a reformation in the manners of the editor, and had he not been induced to remain upon it by some of his friends, who were closely connected with it, and who represented the injury his withdrawal might cause to the Quarterly and the principles it espoused. It must be admitted, that it would have been better for his reputation had he been less compliant in this particular.

CHAPTER XIII.

Marriage of his brother Henry—Goes to Durham—His Family—Canning—Stewardship of the Greenwich Hospital—"The Friend"—Ebenezer Elliott—Criticism—"Edinburgh Annual Register"—William Roberts—Opinions—Death of his Uncle Southey—Generosity—Advice to a young Friend entering College—Shelley—Assassination of the Hon. Mr. Perceval—Politics.

ÆTAT. 35-38.

IN the spring of the year 1809 Southey was called to Durham, to be present at the interesting ceremony of his youngest brother's marriage. It cannot be forgotten how deep an anxiety Southey had taken in this child. Although not rich, he had placed him at Norwich to be carefully educated; and when he was of sufficient years, enabled him to study the science of medicine in the University of Edinburgh, where he received his degree. Upon obtaining this qualification, Dr. Henry Southey established himself at Durham, where, enjoying the countenance of several distinguished families, his reputation quickly rose. The quiet and study of Greta Hall had frequently been interrupted by his visits; and it

was always observed, that the exercise into which he would draw his brother, whose natural inclination made him of too sedentary habits, was always beneficial to his health, and that Southey was never better than during the sojourn of his brother. It was a pleasant duty Southey was called on to perform, and he undertook the journey with the conviction that the travel would be advantageous, and that no pleasure could exceed that of congratulating another upon a piece of good fortune. The company that he met there consisted of several persons whose tastes and pursuits coincided with his own; amongst whom may be mentioned Dr. Zouch, the author of the life of Sir Philip Sydney; and Dr. Bell, the translator of the Hindoo system of teaching, whose plans of education at one time were received with great favour. With this gentleman Southey became more intimate in after years, aided him in developing his theory, and upon his decease had the melancholy task of giving to the world a narrative of his life.

The family of Southey consisted at this time of one son and three daughters, the youngest an infant. Upon these he bestowed an affection peculiarly tender, and in their pleasures and enjoyments found the purest delight. He joined in their innocent sports, threw aside the conventional restraints of age, and appeared amongst them in the full spirit of boyish hilarity, exciting and receiving amusement. Although the interruptions they caused to his studies were frequent, and no one understood better

the value of time, he not only regarded their intrusion with cheerfulness, but welcomed it as an especial privilege. In all that concerned his children he manifested an intense sensibility, and in his love for them his whole happiness was rooted. Upon Herbert his choicest hopes, the strength of his affection, seemed centred. All the father's heart gushed forth when contemplating "his beautiful boy;" and in the future of this child, in the expression of whose looks and in the sweetness of whose smiles even now the animated flush of intellectuality beamed forth, he formed expectations and indulged day-dreams, alas! too beautiful to be realised. His youngest child died about this time. This loss it was natural should be more felt by the mother; yet, in commenting upon the event, he says: "Were I to speak as sincerely of my family as Wordsworth's little girl, my story would be, that I have five children—three of them at home, and two (this last was the second death that had occurred in his family) under my mother's care in heaven."

Southey intended to have passed into Scotland in the May of this year (1810) with his friend Sir Walter. The latter, however, was detained longer than he expected in London; and circumstances arising in his own family to prevent him, the projected journey was postponed. He received, however, a gratifying testimony from his friend, not only of his personal regard, but of the estimation in which he held his high talents. Scott was well acquainted with Canning; and this intimacy he

was desirous of improving for the benefit of Southey. "George Ellis and I," says Sir Walter, in a letter of this date, "have both seen a strong desire in Mr. Canning to be of service to you in any way within his power that could be pointed out, and this without any reference to political opinions." After referring to an official appointment then vacant, which he justly concludes was unfitted for the tastes and habits of a literary man, Sir Walter points out that there were frequently vacant, both in England and Scotland, professors' chairs, to fill either of which Southey could easily make himself competent, and to obtain which for him his friends were willing to exert their utmost influence. He also alludes to diplomatic situations, but naturally infers they would be less preferable to his tastes and pursuits.

The offer thus made bore with it an expression of the high respect in which his services to his country were held by one who not only could appreciate talent, but had it in his power to befriend it. It also was made in full sincerity, and there could be no doubt of the intention of Canning to fulfil the proposal made through Sir Walter. Had this occurred a few years earlier, the offer would have been received with enthusiasm. Portugal and his history would have immediately suggested themselves, and nothing excited greater pleasure than a voyage to the banks of the Tagus ; but he had now become so established in his domestic relations, so confirmed in the enjoyment of fire-side tranquillity, that

he was reluctant to disturb the idea by transferring his household gods to foreign shores. The engagements which immediately pressed upon his mind were so numerous and engrossing, that he scarcely heaved a sigh over his neglected history ; and the beauties of his own lake-scenery, and the occasional visits of his oldest friends, operated upon him so powerfully, that the genial suns of the South and the orange-groves of Cintra had failed to charm his spirit. The only suggestion he made in answer to these kind proposals was that an office should be created, conferring upon its occupier the title of Royal Historiographer, such as existed in Scotland ; and that the salary should be about 400*l.* per annum. "Whether Mr. Canning can do this," he concluded, "I know not ; but if this could be done, it would be adequate to all I want, and beyond that my wishes have never extended." *

Whilst this suggestion was pending, the Stewardship of the Greenwich Hospital for the Derwentwater estates became vacant. This Southey was anxious to procure. The property included a large portion of the country in the immediate vicinity of Keswick, and would give him the power of planting and beautifying. It moreover gave, as he supposed, an income of 600*l.* to 800*l.* a-year.

* In the supposition that no such office existed, Southey was at fault. The title had already been created, and the situation was held by Dutens with a salary of 400*l.*, the word *English* being substituted for *Royal*.

With this object in view, he wrote to Sir Walter and other friends for their interest. Upon inquiry, however, it was ascertained that the situation was no sinecure, and totally unfitted for Southey.

Coleridge, towards the close of the year 1808, the year in which he gave his lectures at the Royal Institution, began his plan of "The Friend," in which he was aided by Daniel Stuart, editor of "The Courier." The circulation by no means answering his expectations, he wrote to Southey soliciting his assistance in the shape of a letter addressed to "The Friend," justifying the form and style of the paper. "Could I attribute it to any removable error of my own," urges Coleridge, "I should be less dejected."

Southey readily acceded to this request; and an epistle was shortly after forwarded, written in an amusing style, and suggesting the sole alteration that the articles should be shorter. "Brevity," it says, quoting a contemporary journalist, "is the humour of the times: a tragedy must not exceed fifteen hundred lines; a fashionable preacher must not trespass above fifteen minutes upon his congregation. We have short waistcoats and short campaigns; everything must be short, except lawsuits, speeches in Parliament, and tax-tables." But in the letter which accompanied this essay a different tone is used. "I have re-read," says Southey, "the last eight numbers; and the truth is, they left me no heart for jesting or irony. In time they will do

their work : it is a form of publication that is unlucky, and that cannot now be remedied. But this evil is merely temporary." However, this prediction was never fulfilled. "The Friend," after extending to twenty-seven numbers, was dropped, it being found that the nature of the papers did not meet the public taste.

We have already seen how willing Southey was to help literary men, or those in any way connected with, or dependent upon, literature. He had frequent appeals made to his judgment upon the effusions of youthful aspirants, to whose feelings he always paid the tenderest regard. So early as October 1808 he had been applied to by Ebenezer Elliott for his opinion upon a poem forwarded at the time, and with a request that, if it were favourable, he would oblige the author by a recommendation to one of the publishers. To this petition Southey objected, upon the plea that the latter looked at whatever was sent them only with an eye to business, and were at once capable of detecting what was likely to answer their purpose in the market. Upon the first point he spoke with great candour; and whilst acknowledging that the poem exhibited the possession of strong poetic feeling, and that in no ordinary degree, dissuaded what he considered premature publication. He rather advised Elliott to feel his way by sending short pieces to the papers for insertion; and if they met the public taste, that it would soon be indicated, and the editor be glad to avail himself of his services. Southey feeling that

there were in the poems indications of a more than ordinary vigour, naturally felt that the author would eventually produce something far superior, and then, on looking back on his early efforts, would regret their publication. There was still a more prevailing reason urged, and this was, the nature of the criticism of the day. He placed before him the probable effect an unfavourable review might have upon him. Regarding his future, it might blast his prospects ; with respect to himself, it might depress his energies and spirit ; at all events, it would subject him to the provoking, if not malicious, ridicule of seeming friends, and thus be a source of constant vexation to his sensitive mind.

The severity of these remarks naturally suggests the idea of an *ex-parte* representation, the witness having himself suffered from the judicial lash of the critic. But if we examine what was at that time the oracle of criticism, the "Edinburgh Review," we find there an evident desire to crush aspiring talent, merely for the sake of doing so. The writers were clever, and they knew it ; but they disliked cleverness in other people. It is well known in what way Byron checked their arrogance.

Ebenezer Elliott, like Burns, was early inured to toil and privation. He was born at Sheffield in the year 1781. Being thrown amongst a town population, he became a strong politician. His love of poetry originated in the perusal of Thompson ; but the pictures

he drew were not confined to rural scenes. Like Crabbe, he depicted the famished condition of the wretched and neglected poor, to whose misery he had many opportunities of bearing witness; and for the eagerness and devotion, as well as truthfulness, with which he represented and exposed the evil results of the Corn-laws, he has been called the Corn-law Rhymers. His genius was original, and he was probably redeemed, by the advice he received from the experience of Southey, from falling into more of those errors of taste, which are found in the midst of much that is sweet, beautiful, and effective in his poems.

Every year seemed to bring to Southey an increase of labour. Notwithstanding that the subjects he had on hand were so many as apparently to leave no leisure for contemplating other employments, he now entered into a new engagement of a much greater magnitude than any he had yet undertaken.

The proprietors of the "Edinburgh Annual Register" had forwarded to him, towards the close of the year 1808, a prospectus of their new publication, soliciting his assistance both in prose and verse. He accordingly sent some trifling contributions, and the matter thus rested until the following August, when they requested him to furnish the periodical with an account of the Spanish affairs during the past year. He had scarcely turned the matter over in his mind, when they wrote again, urging him to undertake the History of Europe

and the historical department generally, the gentleman who had been engaged for that office having disappointed them.

The proprietors were not insensible of the important function they had pressed him to assume. In the prospectus which they had previously issued to the public, they fully reviewed the capacities requisite in one who should attempt historical composition, whether contemporaneous or otherwise. "A sacred veneration for truth; a patient research through dubious and contradictory authorities; a lucid arrangement of materials so painfully collected; a judicious selection, generalising details, yet retaining every circumstance characteristic of the actors and of the age; a style emphatic and dignified in the narration of important events, concise in the less interesting passages, but natural, clear, and unaffected through the whole: these requisites are as peremptorily demanded from him who compiles the annals of the year, as from the historian of a hundred centuries."

The year was far spent when this application was made; and it required more than ordinary speed and industry to complete the work, were it undertaken. However, confident in his own powers, Southey at once closed with the proposal; nor were the publishers at all dissatisfied at the manner in which he discharged the office of Historiographer, unless it might be by the enunciation of bold and startling opinions. To make

it worth his while to devote, not his best energies—for it was his maxim, 'Whatever thine hand findeth for thee to do, do it with all thine heart'—but the best portion of his time, they offered him 400*l.* a-year; and this engagement, whilst it lasted, was one of the most lucrative he had enjoyed.

Nor were the subjects distasteful. His early associations with Spain and Portugal, the principal field of action, made him take a deep and glowing interest in the current affairs of that Peninsula; and with a feeling of personal exultation and hope, he chronicled the general events that affected it. He also considered this engagement superior in kind to the ordinary periodical labour which had previously occupied his time. Reviews, he felt, were only of ephemeral weight, and he frequently complained that his strength was frittered away upon topics of temporary importance. In the task which he had now undertaken to perform, his desire was to produce a work that should be hereafter referred to as an authority; and the hope that he should be able to give to the world an accurate body of contemporaneous history, which might lend a lasting memory to his name, stimulated him to more than ordinary industry in his new labour.

Another incident now occurs in his life, which exhibits his willingness to do good and to be of service to his distressed fellow-creatures, notwithstanding the expense of time and trouble it might cause. An appli-

cation had been made to him by a Mr. James, a banker of Birmingham, to edit a small volume of poems, under the following circumstances. A youth of Bristol, named William Roberts, who received a salary of 70*l.* per annum, which assisted materially towards the support of a father, mother, and an only sister, had recently died of consumption, at the age of nineteen. This youth, a few days before his death, bequeathed his manuscripts in trust to two friends, one of whom was Mr. James, to be published after his death for the benefit of his sister, his last thought being bent upon her helpless condition. He was further informed that the family, now reduced to such distressing indigence, had known better days, and enjoyed the comforts, not to say luxuries, of an easy opulence. The opinion of Southey, upon being consulted, was, that the poems would not of themselves procure a sale, although there were evidences of a truly poetic feeling; and that, therefore, it would be better to dispose of as many as they could by subscription. A memoir of young Roberts was affixed to the poems; and the manner in which Southey exerted himself amongst his friends soon enabled the trustees to place Miss Roberts in a situation, where she was enabled respectably to benefit herself and her parents.

The events that fill up the next six months are but of secondary importance. The first volume of the "History of Brazil" had just appeared. It was one of

the most elegant and beautiful of his publications. He never shrank from that independence of thought which he considered to be the essence of true liberty. In his writings in the "Register" he felt convinced "that he should offend many and please no party." "But my own heart," he says, "is satisfied, and that feeling would always be to me a sufficient reward." His opinions generally met with few supporters; and the letters he received from his friends frequently testified how far they dissented from him on matters of taste, as well as the more important points of political economy. It is well that a man should be guided by his own conviction, and that he should be honest enough to stand by that conviction. We cannot too much admire such a character; but when conviction is founded upon a presumption of knowledge, upon blindfold prejudice and narrow bigotry, all the virtue of consistency is lost. In this case Southey, unfortunately, derived his information from books that belonged to other ages; and overlooking the circumstances relative to modern feelings and modern requirements, dreaded every innovation as the precursor of anarchy. He imagined that he acquired as much knowledge, and could rely as faithfully upon such knowledge, in his retirement amongst the lakes, as if he were busily engaged on the theatre of the world, witnessed with his own eyes the daily political changes that were taking place, conversed personally with the chief actors in the great arena, and had

unlimited opportunities of investigating the main-springs that set in motion and the causes that regulated the progress of events. Upon this supposition he thought and acted; and to this imperfect knowledge we are to ascribe his political creed at this period. "Of three points," such is the simplicity of his confession,* "I have now convinced myself: that the great desideratum in our government is a premier instead of a cabinet; that a regular opposition† is an absurdity that could not exist anywhere but in an island without destroying the government; and that parliamentary reform is the shortest road to anarchy." Upon another occasion he observes: "The evil which I wish to see remedied is the aggregation of landed property, which gives to such a man as —— the command of whole counties, and enables such men as —— and —— to sing, 'We are seven,' like Wordsworth's little girl, into the ear of a minister, and demand for

X * Letter to Grosvenor Bedford, Feb. 1811.

† There is an anecdote recorded of a well-known Eastern viceroy lately in England, who, on being taken to the House of Commons, inquired who those gentlemen were seated on the left of the Speaker. He was informed they were the party who carried on a systematic opposition to the measures of the government. "Opposition!" he exclaimed; "then, in the name of Allah, why does not the Queen cut off all their heads?" Such an incident corresponds well with Oriental notions of government; but we are surprised to see that the opinions of an enlightened Englishman should approximate so nearly to the policy of an Eastern tyrant.

himself situations which he is unfit for. This is a worse evil than that which our mortmain statutes were enacted to remedy ; for it is gradually rooting out the yeomanry of the country, and dwindling the gentry into complete political insignificance. It is not parliamentary reform that can touch this evil ; some further limitation of entail, or a proper scheme of income taxation, might."

The fallacy of such reasoning is obvious ; and it is difficult to conceive how Southey could expect a remedy to be applied to an evil which was a vast source of influence and wealth to those—the oligarchy of the country—who alone had the constitutional power of removing it. Had he reposed an equal confidence in the integrity and virtue of the people, and those who stood forth the advocates for an extension of their rights and privileges, as he did in the wisdom and honesty of placemen, his views would not only have acquired strength and confirmation, but his services to the cause of progress would have been infinitely valuable. He had, however, never applied himself to the study of politics with that exemption from prejudice which is necessary ; he distrusted every author that failed to reciprocate his own opinions, and showed a want of that penetration into the causes and effects of government, which has enabled some men to write upon future events with the precision of prophecy. The disgust which he frequently confesses he felt for

political writing, seems to indicate a conscious inability to grasp those great principles upon which the liberty and prosperity of a nation are founded; and if this incapacity did exist, it might at all events have induced him to oppose with gentleness and write with diffidence.

But another strange hallucination in the mind of Southey may be noticed here. The critics had shown but little favour to his poems, and the small sale which they commanded seemed to bespeak an equal distaste on the part of the public. The opposition which he received from the reviewers was met with an equally persevering opposition, we might also say obstinacy, on his part. The new style, or rhythm, which he had adopted, no less than the character of the poems, especially of those based upon oriental mythology, were there no other reason wanting, was very unfavourable to his *chefs d'œuvre*, and prevented them from ever becoming popular. He was, however, unwilling to throw the odium of this neglect upon the nature and character of his poems, but invariably referred it to an obtuseness in the heart and understanding of the reader, which he presumed it was impossible to reach.

About this time Thomas Southey, of Taunton, died. The distance at which the uncle and the nephew lived from each other, the infrequency of their meetings, and a discordance in tastes and habits, had for some time quenched any hope that yet lingered in the mind of Southey of enjoying the least portion of the property

He had perceived a private secret of the monarch's conduct and with respect to his share in the raising of the standard and even in a personal and important position. Such an act as that suggested to history the propriety of supposing that he had a leading influence relative and events proved the wisdom of this supposition. The end of the journey was not so far as it is from the capital. He was surrounded with the family, and the rest was private domestic services and a few such incidents of the monarch's reign. We cannot but be speculating upon the fact that this country might have been saved from the property being disposed of in the desperate course of things. Had it been left to history, or such a portion of it as would have rendered him independent for life, that busy and bitter warfare which he waged against parties might have been spared him. He might, perhaps, have refused the laurels, which produced him so many political enemies; his pen would not have been exercised in landing one of the most tyrannical and mean of England's monarchs; and his time would have been nobly and honourably devoted to the great object of his heart calmly and uninterruptedly—the "History of Portugal." He would have sat down, far from the world's ignoble strife, dispassionately to present to us the annals of those countries connected with it, and elucidate the rise or decline of empires now sinking into decay or emerging into greatness.

Southey was always anxious to give the best advice to those who consulted him, and to direct them into that course which he believed would be most conducive to their temporal happiness. This he did with great freedom and candour, and the kindness and consideration with which the counsel was imparted seldom failed to render it acceptable and beneficial. A young friend, Mr. James White, who had just matriculated, had about this time requested his opinion on the best course to be pursued in his college career. The substance of his answer, which applies to every young student, consists in advising Mr. White to be careful of his health—to pursue no study continuously for a long time—to seek a diversity of amusement, physical as well as mental—and to take a walk regularly each day. To give a motive for this walk he further invites him to study botany, as a source of the highest delight, and which, in a variety of ways, might be useful to him. After dissuading him from wasting the strength and marrow of his health upon academic honours and pursuits, which would, perhaps, be useless to him beyond the precincts of the University, he observes:—"Your wiser plan should be to look on to that state of life in which you wish and expect to be placed, and to lay in such knowledge as will then turn to account."

A peculiar instance of Southey's generosity now comes before our notice. His friend, Mr. William Taylor of Norwich, had lately met with considerable

losses. In fact, so serious was the derangement of his affairs, that it was probable he would be reduced to penury for the remainder of his life, the interest of the property still remaining not being sufficient for the support of himself and his family. This made Southey extremely anxious to assist him, and an anonymous plan of relief immediately suggested itself to his mind. Accordingly he wrote to a gentleman, the mutual friend* of both, to inquire who was most in Mr. Taylor's confidence, and proposed that an annuity should be purchased for him, that the matter should be conducted with the greatest delicacy, and that the money should be paid without Mr. Taylor's knowing whence it came. "I am ready now," he adds, "either with a yearly ten pounds, or with fifty at once. If more were in my power, more should be done."

It was at this time that Southey became acquainted with Shelley. Having been expelled from Eton for publishing a tract entitled "The Necessity of Atheism," and turned out of doors for marrying a girl of seventeen against his father's consent, Shelley had come to reside at Keswick. Southey fancied he saw in him the image of what he himself was in 1794. Speculative, bold, Pantisocratic, Shelley made no scruple of expressing his metaphysical ideas and mystic philosophy with careless frankness. The corruptions of society were freely

* Dr. Gooch.

handled—the Church and State were fearlessly attacked—and, in his enthusiastic love of liberty, the wildest schemes were proposed and defended. Southey presumed that he should be able to make such an impression on the mind of his new friend as would lead him eventually to abandon his theories. “I tell him,” says Southey, “that all the difference between us is, that he is nineteen and I am thirty-seven.” Shelley, however, did not remain long enough at Keswick to determine what his association with Southey might effect.

The assassination of the Rt. Hon. Mr. Perceval, which occurred on the 11th of May, 1812, threw the whole country into a violent state of excitement, it being regarded, at first, as the opening act of a deep and extensive tragedy. The fears entertained as to the result of this deed by the Conservative party appear to have been extravagant in the extreme, and Southey in the outburst of his feelings writes to his friend :*—“In spite of myself, I have been weeping; this has relieved the throbbings of my head, but my mind is overcharged and must pour itself out.” His first apprehension was that this country stood on the brink of an insurrection of the poor against the rich—that a *bellum servile* was about to bring upon society the most dreadful calamities—and that the world might look forward to an English Jacquerie. His only hope on this occasion was in the

* Grosvenor Bedford.

army, and the promptitude of the Government. The desire of establishing a dictatorship seemed to be present to his imagination, so greatly were his feelings alarmed. Another step was suggested by him, which would have struck directly at the privileges of the highest court in the kingdom. Declaring his wish that the *habeas corpus* should be suspended, he proceeds to demand that every Jacobin newspaper should be seized—that the galleries of the House should be cleared whenever any of these agitators rose to speak, and if they presumed to print the speech out of parliament, that the offender should be summarily punished.

We must look to a period before the Revolution of 1688 to find a parallel for the condition to which Southey would, according to these sentiments, have reduced the liberties of Englishmen. The expression of such sentiments,—not unpalatable to the temper of power at any time, most agreeable at this,—sentiments suited to the most tyrannical periods of our history—excited the most violent indignation amongst the Liberal party. So strongly Conservative was his language—so despotic the measures he suggested against the friends of freedom, that the “Edinburgh Review” did not hesitate to recommend passages in his writings for prosecution; and in the House of Commons, Mr. Whitbread brought the same subject before the notice of its honourable members.

Another question of importance—the education of

the people—Southey views in the same melancholy light. It was obvious that seditious papers—so they were styled at the time—became extensively disseminated and assiduously read, especially “in tap-rooms and pot-houses,” where Cobbett and Hunt were idolised as the evangelists of civil and religious liberty. These papers inquired into and published existing abuses, represented to the people their political rights, and whilst proclaiming those doctrines endeavoured to inflame the populace by exaggerating the tyranny of their oppressors.

“Time,” says Bacon, “is the greatest innovator;” and by a sound deduction concludes, that revolutions in nations and governments ought to be met with wisdom and counsel, and salutary reforms. There are, however, politicians who regard all political changes as inimical to the well-being of a state, and imagine that the laws and institutions of one generation will serve the interests of another. To this class Southey undoubtedly belonged. He desired to maintain intact the power and authority of the Government, as it then existed. The abuses of the State were hallowed by antiquity, and he trembled when the most simple changes were proposed. “Surely he that will not apply new remedies must expect new evils.” The signs of popular discontent were numerous throughout the country, and the rumours of insurrections frequent. Papers and pamphlets innumerable exposed the evils

under which society was labouring, and periodicals of great weight and ability, and men of consummate talent and unimpeachable integrity, advocated and rendered respectable in the eyes of the world by their advocacy the principles of freedom. "The surest way to prevent seditions (if the times will bear it) is to take away the matter of them; for if there be fuel prepared, it is hard to tell whence the spark shall come that shall set it on fire."* Yet so timid was Southey, or, rather, so little foresight had he, that he would, had it been in his power, have crushed the voice of complaint with the violent enactments of legislation, and endeavoured to mould the intellect in the systematic trammels of an absolute education.

* Lord Bacon.

CHAPTER XIV.

Engagements—His Family—Annual Register—Quarterly Review—Life of Nelson—Applications from Literary Aspirants—James Dusatoy—Vacant Office of the Laureateship filled by Southey—Lord Byron—The Carmen Triumphale—Politics—Laureate Odes—Don Roderick, the Last of the Goths—Southey's Poetry—Wordsworth's—Immortality.

ÆTAT. 38-41.

THE period to which we have arrived was the busiest Southey ever knew. The chances of extricating himself from periodical writing were becoming fewer and more few, and he felt that it became his duty—no unpleasing one, so kindly are we moulded by habit and nature to the circumstances in which we are placed—to devote himself to that labour which was the most remunerative. Perhaps the engagement he held on the “Annual Register”—an engagement fully consonant with his own wishes—might have reconciled him to this course of life. It is certain (although he made the two unsuccessful applications referred to in the last chapter for

the stewardship of the Greenwich estates and the office of historiographer) he would only have accepted a post which gave him leisure to study and prosecute his *opus magnum*. This determination fettered his friends, —for though they had it in their power to raise him above a dependent position had no such reservation existed, it was without the range of their influence to confer upon him an office that would be little less than a sinecure.

A family, too, was fast springing up around him. In the endearment of a son, now six years old, who possessed a singularly beautiful and gentle disposition, he experienced all that could warm the feelings of a father. Perhaps he allowed his affections to be too firmly engrossed upon this boy. The manifestation of a bright and ready intellect, and an aptitude for study, insensibly led him to look with fond hope and fonder pride upon the rising future of this youth. His acquaintance with many families in the neighbourhood of Keswick and in the county had ripened into generous and sincere friendships, and powerfully aided in averting his mind from other pursuits, and in quietly settling his spirit to the course he now unreservedly adopted. The precariousness of his income, and a thousand little sources of anxiety and annoyance which a disposition less influenced by the philosophy of life than his would suffer to grow into corroding cares, might, had his mind been so disposed, have given him much disquietude ;

but a reliance upon Providence, and a determination on his part to perform his daily duties to the utmost of his abilities, preserved in him an habitual and well-regulated cheerfulness.

His engagement with the "Annual Register" had now continued nearly three or four years, and been his principal source of income. But this, it appears, had proved an unfortunate speculation, the proprietors sustaining a loss of not less than one thousand pounds per annum. One result of this misfortune was the frequent irregularities of their remittances to Southey. As this delay caused no little embarrassment to his own affairs, he was obliged to intimate his intention of withdrawing altogether from the concern. In the "Quarterly," however, he found a channel through which to convey his sentiments to a more numerous as well as more influential class of readers, and where he could embrace a greater scope and variety of subjects, and depend upon a regular and profitable employment. To this Review he therefore devoted his best powers, and had the satisfaction to find that his reputation rose higher from the articles he inserted in it than from his previous works either in poetry or prose.

He was also engaged upon the "Life of Nelson," and a new poem, to which he designed to give the title of Pelayo, though he eventually changed it for "Don Roderick, the last of the Goths." The "Life of Nelson,"

which was an enlargement of one of his articles in the "Quarterly,"* was not of his own selection. Mr. Murray had requested him to undertake the task, and he accordingly did so, although it might be reasonably thought out of his line. "However," states Southey, "I have satisfied myself in the execution far more than I could have expected to do." And on another occasion he talks of having walked among sea-terms as carefully as a cat does among crockery; of having succeeded in making the narrative continuous and clear—the very reverse of what it was in the previous *Lives*,—and says that the materials were in themselves so full of character, so picturesque, and so sublime, that the book could not fail of being a good one. The judgment he thus passes upon the "Life" was fully justified by the event. Whether the subject insured its success, or the style of its execution satisfied the public taste, it proved to be one of his most popular works.

The reputation of authorship not unfrequently entails upon a literary man the applications of a numerous body of youthful aspirants, who are eager to mount with a "muse of fire the highest heaven of invention." They look to the successful and more experienced writer for approval, encouragement, and recommendation. The publication of "*Kirke White's Remains*" overwhelmed Southey with the production of

* No. V.

young poets, who forwarded to him the first efforts of their kindling minds, and regarded him in the light of a foster-father to the offspring of their young muse. The verses—good, bad, and indifferent—thus sent to him would make a curious collection; but there were few to whom he could hold out that encouragement they sought, and none that he did not warn against falling into the Scylla and Charybdis of literary dependence. In some instances indications of high talent were perceivable, and to these he always spoke in the kindest spirit of exhortation. Ebenezer Elliott may be mentioned as already alluded to. At this time, however, another application, full of promise, was made; and again his sympathies were called into action.

A youth of seventeen, his name was Dusatoy, the son of a retired officer residing at Totness, in the county of Devon, enclosed some verses to Southey, with a letter inquiring how far the publication of a volume of poems would assist him in making his way to the bar, the profession to which he was at that time most inclined. Southey dissuaded him from throwing himself upon the cold judgment of the public, and advised him, if possible, to reach the bar through the University. After giving him some further sound advice, he expresses his readiness to serve him in whatever manner lay within his power, and with all sincerity. This offer was accepted; and, Southey having taken some trouble in the matter, young Dusatoy was entered at Emmanuel College,

Cambridge, where, in the following year, he was an unsuccessful candidate for the English prize,—the present Master of Trinity, Dr. Whewell, being the more fortunate competitor. He, however, had obtained several exhibitions; a promise of a scholarship as soon as a vacancy occurred was also made, and his prospects were most bright and auspicious; but, unfortunately, he was seized with the fever which was at the time ravaging Cambridge with dreadful malignity, and died shortly after. His poems, though giving high proof of a capacious intellect and evidence of future strength, were considered too immature for publication, especially as there was no immediate object, as in the case of William Roberts, for printing them. They, therefore, remained in the hands of his friends.

In the September of this year Southey went to London, and spent a portion of his time with his uncle, Mr. Hill, who had returned from Lisbon in 1808, and was now residing at Streatham, of which he was rector. Whilst in town he received a letter from Sir Walter, apprising him of the death of the late poet-laureate, and tendering the vacant office, already proposed for himself, but declined. At the same time Sir Walter hints at some of the ridiculous duties of the office, as well as the incompetent manner in which the late laureate had discharged them; not without hope, however, of having them removed, by the influence of some person in power with the Prince Regent.

Without hesitation Southey wrote to the Rt. Hon. Mr. Croker to express his willingness to undertake the duties of the vacant office; but, at the same time, made a few specifications as to the terms of his acceptance. He was not disposed to hold the appointment if it were incumbent upon him to write to order, as school-boys write their themes, at stated times and on stated subjects; but that if it were understood that upon great public events he might either write or be silent, as the spirit moved, he would accept the office as an honourable distinction, which, under such circumstances, it would become.

It appears that some confusion existed about the privilege of appointment to the laureateship. All, however, terminated happily, owing to the friendship and esteem of the respective persons interested. Southey had been advised by Gifford and Bedford, who had already been exerting themselves in his behalf, to call upon Mr. Croker at the Admiralty. Upon his arrival he found that Mr. Croker had already spoken to the prince, who had expressed his approbation that the office should be given to Southey. But shortly after, Southey's patron, meeting Lord Liverpool, discovered that the office had already been offered by some of the cabinet to Scott. The prince was displeased at this, and was resolved that the laureateship should remain as he had disposed of it. The refusal of Sir Walter to accept

it prevented any further discussion on the subject, which might otherwise have been embarrassing.*

This stay in the metropolis and its vicinity—for his head-quarters were at Streatham—was the longest absence from home Southey had yet made. It was, however, enlivened by the society of his brother, Dr. Henry Southey, who had now taken up his residence in London; of his brother, Lieutenant Southey; and many of his old friends, amongst whom, upon this occasion, was Sir Humphry Davy. He was also much noticed in those circles where literary merit finds a casual patronage. At Lord Holland's he occasionally dined, and met the poet Rogers, the orator Sir James Mackintosh, and other distinguished personages. At one of these *réunions* he was introduced to Lord Byron, who came in during the evening; and, notwithstanding his remarks in the "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers," they met with all becoming courtesy, and he was better pleased with his lordship's person and manner than he expected.

* Sir Walter Scott, on tendering the post to Southey, was under the impression that the appointment was worth between 300*l.* and 400*l.* per annum. In a letter to the former, however, Southey says that the original salary of the office was 100 marks. It was raised for Ben Jonson to 100*l.*, and a tierce of Spanish Canary wine, now wickedly commuted for 26*l.*; which said sum, unlike the Canary, is subject to income-tax, land-tax, and Heaven knows what taxes besides. The whole net income is little more or less than 90*l.*

Some suggestions with reference to the duties of the laureateship had been thrown out previous to Southey's accepting that office, and he had even intimated that those reforms were the conditions upon which he would receive the honour. He was, however, informed that no alteration could be made whilst the vacancy existed; but that afterwards, "Croker, or some one in the prince's confidence, would suggest to him the fitness of making the reform in an office which required some reform to rescue it from the contempt into which it had fallen."

No amendments were, however, made, and whilst Southey was expecting them to be introduced, the trammels of his new office made themselves felt. The recent downfall of Napoleon, the restitution of the Bourbons, and the visit of the Allied Sovereigns, required a national commemoration, and he was called upon to produce a poem on the event. He soon found, however, that the rules and etiquette of place and party were to be observed by him. He was made to understand that he was not at liberty to pour out the full indignation of his sentiments upon the occasion. In his "Carmen Triumphale," a poem intended to celebrate the joy and exultation diffused over the whole country by the termination of the war, he met with many subjects congenial to his views and feelings, and what was political he expressed *con amore*. But there were limitations. He would have denounced in the same poem Napoleon

Bonaparte, "who," in his opinion, "after the murders of the Duc d'Enghien and Palm—avowed, open, notorious as they were—was under the ban of humanity." It was, however, intimated to him that he wrote in an official capacity, that he must not hold up to the condemnation of the world a man—however heinous were his crimes, however flagrant his violation of those principles which are the bond and security of society—if he were a *friendly power*: in fact, that he must train his muse to sing the praises of him a minister praises, and the exploits of a hero, however apocryphal they might be, whom the sovereign would eulogise. "There might be an impropriety," suggests his friend Rickman, "in some parts of it (the "Carmen Triumphale") appearing as the poet-laureate's production." And in a letter to his uncle he confesses,—“ I spoilt my poem, in deference to Rickman's judgment and Croker's advice, by cutting out all that related to Bonaparte, and which gave strength, purport, and coherence to the whole.” It is evident from the poem itself, that, whilst in his laudation of the achievements of the British army and Spanish valour he was sincere, he wrote ill at ease, and had a subject he knew not how to handle. He was not allowed to remain silent. It was, however, one of those occasions when the return of peace and the spirit of brotherhood were pure subjects for rejoicing, and when the events should have inspired generous sentiments and an exalted enthusiasm. But

Southey condescended to mingle the grovelling politics of party, the bigotry of prejudice, and the feelings of personal triumph, into his ode; and instead of making it a national and universal pæan, worthy the better feelings of the bard, and the circumstances that gave rise to it, it was rendered disfigured and spiritless, —a poem of no note and no acceptance.

The political sentiments of Southey upon the war question, his fears of an alarming outbreak of popular violence in this country, and his views upon national education, have been already introduced. Upon two subjects of considerable importance he thought and felt with no less warmth: the Catholic question, which now began to agitate the public mind; and the Manufacturing system, which was rising into importance. On the former question he argued with great clearness and force. His long residence in Lisbon, his close observations of the habits and ceremonies of the ecclesiastics in Spain and Portugal, his study of the monkish works, led him to regard any concession to the Catholics as dangerous to the constitution of Church and State. His pen was, accordingly, often eloquently employed in exposing the practical errors of Romanism, and the tendency of their institutions; and, with undeviating consistency, he opposed the views of the Emancipationists.

He did not regard the system adopted by the manufacturers, as it then existed, with any great favour.

He viewed the proprietors of factories as men who were willing to amass immense fortunes at the expenditure of the life-blood of the operatives; who neglected the comforts and well-being of those under them; who erected and maintained hot-beds of vice and corruption, where swarms of ignorant and undisciplined people congregated; and who were the cause of the great increase of pauperism.*

Southey's theory of foreign politics — considering how firmly he adhered to the established order of things, and the exercise of all but an absolute exercise of power in the government of this country—appears somewhat inconsistent. Whilst the negotiations at Paris were still pending, he often expressed his hope that the Bourbons would not be restored. The detestable conduct of that house, and their incapacity for government, had sufficiently radicalised him against them; and he wisely remarks, that when the expulsion of a reigning family takes place from internal causes and not from external, restorations are bad things. Southey was, also, one of those who expected that Napoleon would escape from his little empire in Elba, re-organise his

* This point was refuted by his friend, J. Rickman. "For instance," remarks the latter, "no county is more agricultural than Sussex, where *twenty-three persons*, parents and children, in one hundred, receive parish relief; no county to be more referred to the manufacturing character than Lancashire, where *is* relieved by the parish are *seven in one hundred*—not of the agricultural district."

veterans, and disturb the public peace. The terms upon which this mighty conqueror was treated, accordingly, appeared to him too lenient for a man who had so long warred against the nations of Europe; and the correctness of his anticipations was confirmed by the retreat from Ligny, and the carnage of Waterloo.

"The laureateship will certainly have this effect upon me," writes Southey, shortly after his appointment, "that it will make me produce more poetry than I otherwise should have done;" and this year seems to have been a prolific one in subjects. The anticipated marriage of the Princess Charlotte with the Prince of Orange suggested a "*Carmen Maritale*," and the plan of the poem, and a large portion of it, had already been completed before the nuptials were broken off. The presence of the Allied Sovereigns reminded him again of the duties of his new office, and with great promptitude appeared odes to H.R.H. the Prince of Wales,* His Imperial Majesty the Emperor of Russia, and His Majesty the King of Prussia, which Southey made a vehicle for introducing his political feelings, and turning what

* In his ode to H.R.H. the Prince of Wales we have the following:—

"At home worse dangers compassed thee,
Where shallow counsellors,
A weak but clamorous crew,
Pestered the land, and with their clamorous breath
Poisoned the public ear."

A poet should write for mankind, not for a faction.

should have been a lofty and noble theme into a tirade of factious sentiments and inapplicable compliments.

The poem that next appeared, "Roderick, the Last of the Goths," did Southey greater justice, and is the most easy and regular, most natural and unaffected, of all his poetical writings. It contains more pathos, more elevated sentiments, fewer quaintnesses, and a sweeter eloquence than any other, and may be read and re-read with new sensations of delight. It has less of that gorgeous imagery with which "Thalaba" is embroidered, or that fearful wonder that excites us in the "Curse of Kehama;" but it approaches nearer the reality of life, and the earnestness and simplicity of truth.

Lord Byron, it appears, had upon some occasion spoken highly in favour of Southey's poems, and compared parts of them—so the report reached Southey—with similar passages of Milton. The Laureate, however, who was not willing to seem more moved by his lordship's praise than he was by his censure in the "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers," in a private letter reverts to the remarks which Lord Byron had made. Upon this he institutes an inquiry—the subject seemed to lead to it—into the quality and character of his own genius, and also the genius of Wordsworth. It has always been a matter of question how far an author is capable of judging rightly of the merits of his own works. The preference which Milton entertained for

his "Paradise Regained," and it is said Homer conceived for the "Odyssey," are well-known instances of this kind, and have long been contradicted by the verdict of the world.

Southey, in writing to his brother, amusingly disclaims all similarity with Milton; allows that there may be fair grounds of comparison with Tasso, with Virgil, or with Homer; and suspects that, after all, Chiabura was the writer whom he most resembled in the constitution of his mind.

It was a matter of no slight chagrin, however, to Southey, that his poems met with so restricted a sale. While Scott could command 3000*l.* for less matter than would enrich him with 300*l.*; whilst Moore could obtain 3000 guineas for "Lalla Rookh," before a line of it was written; whilst Byron's verse electrified every circle,—his epics found but few readers and fewer purchasers. But he consoled himself with the idea that he was writing for posterity, whilst the reputation of Byron and his school was ephemeral. In this Southey thought more hopefully than advisedly. The greatest poetical works, those which remain to our own day, after the lapse of ages, and are destined to exist as long as an exalted and enlightened literature exists in the world, have obtained immediate popularity; and it is unnecessary to inquire into the cause as long as poet and priest of nature are regarded as synonyms. Without inquiring what praise or dispraise "the blind old man of Scio's rocky

isle," wandering from city to city, and island to island, chaunting his heroic lay, obtained, the names of Sophocles and Euripides, Virgil and Horace, at once rise before us. Their reputation was established "*ære perennius*" before their death; and so sensible were they of it, that the last, interpreting the feelings of the others, declared that the rewards of the ennobling lay should mingle them with the gods, and crown their names with immortality.* The muse of Dante, Petrarch, Tasso, and Ariosto; of Shakspeare, Spenser, Jonson, Dryden, and Pope; received the homage due to genius before their spirits quitted this nether sphere; and though exceptions have been raised in the case of Milton, it may be proved that his is no exception. His "*Paradise Lost*" and "*Regained*" were poems of a religious character, and appeared at a time when the nation, surfeited with puritanical fanaticism, rushed into the wildest extremes of libertinism; when, its author being marked as the secretary of Cromwell, party-spirit could not be

- * "*Exegi monumentum ære perennius,
Regalique situ pyramidum altius;
Quod non imber edax, non Aquilo impotens
Possit diruere, aut innumerabilis
Annorum series et fuga temporum.
Non omnis moriar.*"—*Carmen*: lib. iii. Ode 30.

The judicious favour of Augustus, the generous and dispassionate praise of Mæcenæ, and the applause of his appreciating countrymen, converted this beautiful song of exultation, which might otherwise have been charged with presumptuous vanity, into the sublime strains of a conscious and confident genius.

tempted to listen to the voice of one who had served under the Commonwealth ; and when the infidelity of the age weighed heavily against the reception of an epic, based upon the mysteries of the Christian faith. It appears, however, that within eleven years of its publication, the "Paradise Lost" had passed through two editions,—that three thousand copies had been sold,—that a third was preparing, and that the bookseller even then found it expedient to purchase the copyright. We have need of no further proof that the reputation of Milton was rapidly spreading.

CHAPTER XV.

Battle of Waterloo — Public Rejoicings — Visit to the Continent
— Pilgrimage to Waterloo — Brussels — French History of
Brazil — Detained at Aix-la-Chapelle — Companions — Ghent
— Béguinages — Return — Death of his Son — Employments
— Visits — Owen of Lanark.

ÆTAT. 41-42.

THE intelligence of the victory of the 18th of June had just reached England, and the name of Waterloo resounded throughout the length and breadth of the island.

Those who had watched the progress of Napoleon's arms with a dazzled admiration, and regarded this "Child of Destiny" as invincible, as well as those who, prognosticating the ultimate issue of events, believed that no permanent peace could be expected whilst Bonaparte commanded the legions of France, now expressed the most enthusiastic sentiments of gratulation on this fresh and crowning result of British prowess. Southey, who could view Napoleon in no other light

than as the implacable enemy of European tranquillity, as a man who was laid under the ban of humanity, and instead of being shielded by the glory which a hundred battles had wreathed round his name, should be treated as a common traitor to mankind, was amongst the most joyous upon this triumphant occasion. Looking back through the pages of history, he could fix upon no nearer epoch than the victory of Charles Martel to which to compare the results of this battle, and in the overthrow of the Moors by this prince, he imagined that he could perceive an achievement in favour of civilisation similar, if not equal, to the consequences that Waterloo would effect.

The rejoicings upon the occasion were not confined to personal or private feelings. The whole country resounded with the voice of congratulation, and every kind of public demonstration was suggested in commemoration of the great event. The vicinity of Keswick was not silent; and Southey took a joyful part in all the proceedings which were intended to express the gratitude of the Cumberland people. Monday, the 21st of August, was appointed for the public celebration of that auspicious event. With all the enthusiasm of his nature, he entered into the preparations of that triumphant occasion, and eagerly sought out whatever might give a new excitement or more brilliant effect to the display of patriotic feeling in his own neighbourhood. The romantic Skiddaw was to be the scene and witness

of their rejoicings. Thither he, his family, a party of friends, among whom were Lord and Lady Sunderland, Wordsworth, Mr. James Boswell, and several Lakers, together with a large assemblage of the people, repaired, and on its lofty summit feasted off the genuine symbols of English hospitality. Nor were the duties of that festive season forgotten. The most loyal toasts, the most national sentiments, were pledged and responded to in a capacious bowl of punch, and with the heartiest cheers. Every heart caught the spirit of the hour, and a thousand voices gave life and joyousness to the jubilee. As the evening drew on, and the shadows of night were darkening the landscape, bonfires—huge, substantial, combustible, that might have served as beacons in times of danger and tumult—were lighted, flambeaux kindled, and large blazing balls of tow and tar rolled down the steep sides of the hill, until the surrounding country was illuminated, and the venerable mountain appeared like a pyramid of fire. These rejoicings continued to a late hour, nor were the flames of national revelry extinguished until the rising glow of the East “paled the ineffectual fires” of earth.

No sooner had the gates of the Continent been thrown open to the British nation, than many who had been prevented, by the hostility of the two nations, from visiting France and other countries of Europe, hastened over. There were few places to which a new and a painful interest had not been given. It was not

to observe the manners and customs of the people, to learn their language and their politics, to admire works of art, or to feast their eyes upon the beauties of Nature, that the multitude now flocked over. Their steps were directed to spots once inhabited and gay with the business and vanities of life, now barren and desolate, to scenes of death and triumph, of horror and glory. Those places which had been signalled by the events of a great battle, and consecrated by the blood of thousands, became the shrines to which the patriotic devotees made a reverential pilgrimage. Ligny, Brussels, Quatre-Bras, Waterloo, were names treasured up in the heart of Southey, and to these spots he determined to follow the multitude.

Having made up a party of his own, he proceeded *viâ* Ostend to Brussels. At Bruges he was struck with the venerableness of that ancient city. Four centuries had apparently altered little of its appearance, and it stood a monument and a specimen of the age of Froissart and the Tudors. The neatness of the poorer inhabitants, and the cleanliness of their abodes, left a favourable impression upon his mind, especially when comparing it with Ghent, where the spirit of commerce had created a greater inequality, and a prevalence of French manners had given an immoral tone to the people. At Brussels he found still stronger proof of Parisian influence: the new town had assumed altogether the

aspect, and the people the idleness and profligacy, of the capital of the Continent.

When Southey arrived on the plain of Waterloo, the fields were cultivated, and wild flowers springing over the graves of unnumbered heroes. Peace was striving to heal, and cover with a green mantle, the rude scars which Nature had received during that terrible shock. Yet there were strewn around sufficient vestiges of that dreadful event. Caps, cartridges, bullets, boxes, broken helmets, &c., gave evidence of the recent conflict, and served as a powerful link to the imagination to carry it back to the scenes of havoc which War perpetrated that day. The perforated walls of La Belle Alliance, the ruins of Hougomont, and the desolate appearance of Quatre-Bras, told the presence of enemies, the concussion of nations.

During the visit, whatever might assist him in the progress of his History, or his future literary labours, was not overlooked. He purchased a valuable lot of books, and bargained for a set of the "Acta Sanctorum." He also met with and bought a French "History of Brazil," just published by M. Alphonse de Beauchamp, in three volumes octavo. The preface, curiously enough, stated that, having finished the first two volumes, the author thought it advisable to see if any new light had been thrown upon the subject by modern writers; that Mr. Southey had published a history lately, but had

offered no fresh information—in fact, that the English work was a compilation from his own; that Mr. Southey had promised much for his second volume, but that the hope of literary Europe had again been deceived—no second volume making its appearance. Doubtless no person regretted this delay more than M. Alphonse de Beauchamp himself. Upon examining his work, it will be found that the whole of the two first volumes, and a third of the other, are copied from Southey's recent work; that he had not only used Southey's references, but had been guilty of committing errors which proved that he was not acquainted with the Portuguese language.

Many were the inconveniences experienced during this tour, owing to bad roads, bad conveyances, bad accommodation, and bad attendants; but a circumstance which gave Southey much greater uneasiness damped for a while the pleasure of the journey. His daughter, Edith May, who accompanied him upon this trip, became seriously indisposed; and they were obliged to remain at Aix-la-Chapelle for six days, in consequence. This delay, however, excepting the unpleasantness of the cause, was productive of much interest. During every day, at the *table d'hôte* of the inn, he was thrown into the company of officers who had served in the late campaigns on the side of the Prussians. Major Dreski, one of the number, was not only communicative, but had been the actor in many "hair-

aspect, and the people the idleness and profligacy, of the capital of the Continent.

When Southey arrived on the plain of Waterloo, the fields were cultivated, and wild flowers springing over the graves of unnumbered heroes. Peace was striving to heal, and cover with a green mantle, the rude scars which Nature had received during that terrible shock. Yet there were strewn around sufficient vestiges of that dreadful event. Caps, cartridges, bullets, boxes, broken helmets, &c., gave evidence of the recent conflict, and served as a powerful link to the imagination to carry it back to the scenes of havoc which War perpetrated that day. The perforated walls of La Belle Alliance, the ruins of Hougomont, and the desolate appearance of Quatre-Bras, told the presence of enemies, the concussion of nations.

During the visit, whatever might assist him in the progress of his History, or his future literary labours, was not overlooked. He purchased a valuable lot of books, and bargained for a set of the "*Acta Sanctorum*." He also met with and bought a French "*History of Brazil*," just published by M. Alphonse de Beauchamp, in three volumes octavo. The preface, curiously enough, stated that, having finished the first two volumes, the author thought it advisable to see if any new light had been thrown upon the subject by modern writers; that Mr. Southey had published a history lately, but had

offered no fresh information—in fact, that the English work was a compilation from his own; that Mr. Southey had promised much for his second volume, but that the hope of literary Europe had again been deceived—no second volume making its appearance. Doubtless no person regretted this delay more than M. Alphonse de Beauchamp himself. Upon examining his work, it will be found that the whole of the two first volumes, and a third of the other, are copied from Southey's recent work; that he had not only used Southey's references, but had been guilty of committing errors which proved that he was not acquainted with the Portuguese language.

Many were the inconveniences experienced during this tour, owing to bad roads, bad conveyances, bad accommodation, and bad attendants; but a circumstance which gave Southey much greater uneasiness damped for a while the pleasure of the journey. His daughter, Edith May, who accompanied him upon this trip, became seriously indisposed; and they were obliged to remain at Aix-la-Chapelle for six days, in consequence. This delay, however, excepting the unpleasantness of the cause, was productive of much interest. During every day, at the *table d'hôte* of the inn, he was thrown into the company of officers who had served in the late campaigns on the side of the Prussians. Major Dreski, one of the number, was not only communicative, but had been the actor in many "hair-

aspect, and the people the idleness and profligacy, of the capital of the Continent.

When Southey arrived on the plain of Waterloo, the fields were cultivated, and wild flowers springing over the graves of unnumbered heroes. Peace was striving to heal, and cover with a green mantle, the rude scars which Nature had received during that terrible shock. Yet there were strewn around sufficient vestiges of that dreadful event. Caps, cartridges, bullets, boxes, broken helmets, &c., gave evidence of the recent conflict, and served as a powerful link to the imagination to carry it back to the scenes of havoc which War perpetrated that day. The perforated walls of La Belle Alliance, the ruins of Hougomont, and the desolate appearance of Quatre-Bras, told the presence of enemies, the concussion of nations.

During the visit, whatever might assist him in the progress of his History, or his future literary labours, was not overlooked. He purchased a valuable lot of books, and bargained for a set of the "Acta Sanctorum." He also met with and bought a French "History of Brazil," just published by M. Alphonse de Beauchamp, in three volumes octavo. The preface, curiously enough, stated that, having finished the first two volumes, the author thought it advisable to see if any new light had been thrown upon the subject by modern writers; that Mr. Southey had published a history lately, but had

offered no fresh information—in fact, that the English work was a compilation from his own; that Mr. Southey had promised much for his second volume, but that the hope of literary Europe had again been deceived—no second volume making its appearance. Doubtless no person regretted this delay more than M. Alphonse de Beauchamp himself. Upon examining his work, it will be found that the whole of the two first volumes, and a third of the other, are copied from Southey's recent work; that he had not only used Southey's references, but had been guilty of committing errors which proved that he was not acquainted with the Portuguese language.

Many were the inconveniences experienced during this tour, owing to bad roads, bad conveyances, bad accommodation, and bad attendants; but a circumstance which gave Southey much greater uneasiness damped for a while the pleasure of the journey. His daughter, Edith May, who accompanied him upon this trip, became seriously indisposed; and they were obliged to remain at Aix-la-Chapelle for six days, in consequence. This delay, however, excepting the unpleasantness of the cause, was productive of much interest. During every day, at the *table d'hôte* of the inn, he was thrown into the company of officers who had served in the late campaigns on the side of the Prussians. Major Dreski, one of the number, was not only communicative, but had been the actor in many "hair-

aspect, and the people the idleness and profligacy, of the capital of the Continent.

When Southey arrived on the plain of Waterloo, the fields were cultivated, and wild flowers springing over the graves of unnumbered heroes. Peace was striving to heal, and cover with a green mantle, the rude scars which Nature had received during that terrible shock. Yet there were strewn around sufficient vestiges of that dreadful event. Caps, cartridges, bullets, boxes, broken helmets, &c., gave evidence of the recent conflict, and served as a powerful link to the imagination to carry it back to the scenes of havoc which War perpetrated that day. The perforated walls of La Belle Alliance, the ruins of Hougomont, and the desolate appearance of Quatre-Bras, told the presence of enemies, the concussion of nations.

During the visit, whatever might assist him in the progress of his History, or his future literary labours, was not overlooked. He purchased a valuable lot of books, and bargained for a set of the "Acta Sanctorum." He also met with and bought a French "History of Brazil," just published by M. Alphonse de Beauchamp, in three volumes octavo. The preface, curiously enough, stated that, having finished the first two volumes, the author thought it advisable to see if any new light had been thrown upon the subject by modern writers; that Mr. Southey had published a history lately, but had

offered no fresh information—in fact, that the English work was a compilation from his own; that Mr. Southey had promised much for his second volume, but that the hope of literary Europe had again been deceived—no second volume making its appearance. Doubtless no person regretted this delay more than M. Alphonse de Beauchamp himself. Upon examining his work, it will be found that the whole of the two first volumes, and a third of the other, are copied from Southey's recent work; that he had not only used Southey's references, but had been guilty of committing errors which proved that he was not acquainted with the Portuguese language.

Many were the inconveniences experienced during this tour, owing to bad roads, bad conveyances, bad accommodation, and bad attendants; but a circumstance which gave Southey much greater uneasiness damped for a while the pleasure of the journey. His daughter, Edith May, who accompanied him upon this trip, became seriously indisposed; and they were obliged to remain at Aix-la-Chapelle for six days, in consequence. This delay, however, excepting the unpleasantness of the cause, was productive of much interest. During every day, at the *table d'hôte* of the inn, he was thrown into the company of officers who had served in the late campaigns on the side of the Prussians. Major Dreski, one of the number, was not only communicative, but had been the actor in many "hair-

aspect, and the people the idleness and profligacy, of the capital of the Continent.

When Southey arrived on the plain of Waterloo, the fields were cultivated, and wild flowers springing over the graves of unnumbered heroes. Peace was striving to heal, and cover with a green mantle, the rude scars which Nature had received during that terrible shock. Yet there were strewn around sufficient vestiges of that dreadful event. Caps, cartridges, bullets, boxes, broken helmets, &c., gave evidence of the recent conflict, and served as a powerful link to the imagination to carry it back to the scenes of havoc which War perpetrated that day. The perforated walls of La Belle Alliance, the ruins of Hougomont, and the desolate appearance of Quatre-Bras, told the presence of enemies, the concussion of nations.

During the visit, whatever might assist him in the progress of his History, or his future literary labours, was not overlooked. He purchased a valuable lot of books, and bargained for a set of the "*Acta Sanctorum*." He also met with and bought a French "*History of Brazil*," just published by M. Alphonse de Beauchamp, in three volumes octavo. The preface, curiously enough, stated that, having finished the first two volumes, the author thought it advisable to see if any new light had been thrown upon the subject by modern writers; that Mr. Southey had published a history lately, but had

offered no fresh information—in fact, that the English work was a compilation from his own; that Mr. Southey had promised much for his second volume, but that the hope of literary Europe had again been deceived—no second volume making its appearance. Doubtless no person regretted this delay more than M. Alphonse de Beauchamp himself. Upon examining his work, it will be found that the whole of the two first volumes, and a third of the other, are copied from Southey's recent work; that he had not only used Southey's references, but had been guilty of committing errors which proved that he was not acquainted with the Portuguese language.

Many were the inconveniences experienced during this tour, owing to bad roads, bad conveyances, bad accommodation, and bad attendants; but a circumstance which gave Southey much greater uneasiness damped for a while the pleasure of the journey. His daughter, Edith May, who accompanied him upon this trip, became seriously indisposed; and they were obliged to remain at Aix-la-Chapelle for six days, in consequence. This delay, however, excepting the unpleasantness of the cause, was productive of much interest. During every day, at the *table d'hôte* of the inn, he was thrown into the company of officers who had served in the late campaigns on the side of the Prussians. Major Dreski, one of the number, was not only communicative, but had been the actor in many "hair-

breadth 'scapes," that made his narrative still more stirring and exciting. He was at Ligny with Blucher when the latter fell from his horse, and was ridden over by the French cavalry. Another, Major Petry, to whom it is said, by his brother-officers, that Blucher was indebted for the battle of Domwitz, was there. A most perfect cordiality existed between the whole company. The Prussians extolled the character and conduct of the British, whilst the latter returned the compliment, Southey giving as a toast, "La Belle Alliance: may it continue as long as the memory of the battle!" which was received with the utmost enthusiasm. But the person who excited the deepest interest in Southey was a young Pole, whose father held one of the highest offices in Poland: his name was Henri de Foster. He had enlisted in the Prussian service when a boy; had been taken prisoner by the French, and conducted to the frontiers of the empire, where he was cruelly treated. From thence he escaped back into Poland, and joined the corps of the Duke of Brunswick, to whom he was faithfully attached throughout all his dangers and struggles. Having afterwards entered the German Legion, he engaged in the most fatiguing and harassing parts of the Peninsular campaign, from the opening of the lines at Torres Vedras to the conclusion of the war. He had obtained the rank of Major; but the severe duty of an infantry officer had impaired his strength, and his constitution was further injured by a fall down a preci-

pice in the Pyrenees, so that he was obliged to quit the army; which he did, upon unlimited leave. This was congenial society for Southey. Here he could obtain from eye-witnesses accounts of those battles and the progress of those events in which he had taken so thrilling an interest at home; nor were his feelings less heightened to behold the very actors in those dreadful scenes. The campaigner of Torres Vedras, Talavera, Barossa, Salamanca, and Thoulouse, was too important a personage to be neglected: a mutual esteem sprang up, and the separation took place with warm anticipations of a renewal of their meeting.

There existed formerly in France, and still exists in some parts of Germany, an institution, partly secular and partly religious, established for the benefit of reduced gentlewomen. In the former country, it was called a Chapter of Canonesses; and in the latter, Béguinages,—a term derived from St. Béga, their patron saint. They differed in some respects; not so much, however, in the objects of their foundation, as in the rules of their order. In the early part of his life, the attention of Southey had been called to the consideration of the helpless condition of a class of women in England who, born to opulence, or an easy position in life, are frequently reduced by a reverse of fortune, the sudden death of a parent, or some other bereavement, to a most pitiable and irremediable destitution. Innumerable instances of this kind of poverty in this country

were represented to him; and his friend, John Rickman, who had brought the subject before his notice, proposed a plan not dissimilar to the above institutions for relieving the objects of his sympathy. Southey was diverted, however, at the time, from this subject by his tour to Portugal; and on his return, things of more pressing importance occupied his mind. His visit to the Continent recalled the circumstance, and he was unwilling to leave the country without deriving further knowledge concerning this subject.

The Béguines of Germany*—or rather Brabant and Flanders, for to these two provinces are they confined—live in enclosed convents. Their principal establishment is stationed at Ghent; and to this place Southey repaired for his information respecting their order, rules, and number. The Béguinage he found situated at one

* In France, the Chapter of Canonesses was intended for the daughters of wealthy and noble families, whose minds were too much influenced by the pleasures and gaieties of this life to enter upon the solemn and hope-crushing vows of the cloister, but for whom the wasted estate of their forefathers was incapable of providing a dowry, and whom the pernicious etiquette of the ancient régime had taught to despise the hand of a plebeian and an inferior. In these unenclosed convents, consisting of handsome houses situated in the midst of neat gardens, and clustering round a small chapel, they passed a life devoted partly to the world, partly to the contemplation of heavenly things. They were under the surveillance of the eldest canoness, and formed associations of two or three, who resided together in friendly community.

extremity of the town: it consists of a collection of contiguous houses of different sizes, with a garden in front, and a large brick wall inclosing them around. There are a church and a burying-ground within the enclosure; and one of the innumerable streams that intersect the city flows through the Béguinage, affording the means of comfort and cleanliness to the community. Connected with the institution there is a refectory, where the sisters dine in common; but the rules permit them, if it should be the desire of any, to have their meals sent them to their own chambers. These are small, and furnished with every necessary comfort, but no superfluous luxury, every extraordinary expense being contrary to the regulations. As the time of its members would be monotonous were there no employments, the duties assigned them consist in receiving the sick who come to them, supporting and attending to them as long as their illness requires. The whole establishment is under the protection of St. Elizabeth of Hungary, and over each door is inscribed the name of some saint whom they adopt as a patron. The Béguines number about 6000, of whom 620 reside at Ghent; and though they are bound by no vows to observe its rules, no instance is on record—they tell it with pride—of a Béguine deserting from the institution.

After having examined the establishment and collected all the information he could, the want of similar asylums in England, where those whose minds were so

constituted might retire, forcibly impressed itself upon Southey. He lamented that in our alms-houses, poor-houses, and hospitals, the absence of religion was frequently too obvious ; and he felt that it were better that a man should die credulous of the presumptuous consolation of his priest, and pressing a crucifix to his lips, than as many expire in this country, without any knowledge of whither they are going, or into whose awful presence they are about to enter.

Having visited Maestricht, St. Trou, and Louvaine, Southey returned to Brussels, and paid another visit to Hougomont and Waterloo. From thence he proceeded to Antwerp, and back through Ghent to Calais, at which place he embarked for England, and arrived safely at Keswick about the first week in December. The impressions which he had received upon his journey were soon turned into verse, and given to the public under the title of "A Pilgrimage to Waterloo," in which he describes the desolate aspect of the villages that had suffered by the hostilities—gives some feeling touches of domestic happiness—and draws some familiar pictures of the horrors of war and the blessings of peace.

He was now visited by one of those bereavements that most deeply affect the spirit of man. We have before spoken of his only son Herbert,—a child who possessed a quickness of intellect and a love of study which won, with the most partial fondness, his father's heart. It happened in this, as in many other instances

of a similar precocity, that a feebleness of body attends upon an early strength of mind. Whilst only ten years of age a fatal sickness fed upon the health of this fair boy, and cut down the promises of future excellence which seemed whitening over unto the harvest.* No language can portray the anguish that Southey felt upon the occasion. He found that he had entwined his own happiness too closely around the existence of this child. Educated and nurtured by his own hand, Herbert had been his constant companion. Now that he was gone everything appeared desolation, or only so many tokens to keep alive the remembrance of his loss; whilst the impossibility of wresting his mind from the object of its deep affection showed the strength of that passion. In vain does the eye linger around the haunts of the departed, still trusting that he will come—still faithless that he is dead—still fondly clinging to the semblance of hope, when hope itself is fled. In such a moment, how immeasurably priceless is the light of immortality! In the midst of this cloud of sorrow, whilst the waters of affliction are pouring over the soul—when despair is on the brink of effacing every thought, every object, every desire, but the unutterableness of its grief—a gleam of sunshine penetrates this darkness, faint at first, but gradually brighter at each return, until it has acquired the effulgence of a spiritual day: this gleam is faith—

* He died on the 17th of April, 1816.

faith in an existence after this—faith that there is a place of refuge where the weary are at rest—faith that they who love and have loved shall meet again for ever.

As soon as Southey's frame of mind enabled him to recommence his labours, he set to work with extraordinary vigour, hoping to bury a portion of his grief in action. "My mind is closely employed," he now writes, "throughout the whole day. I do more in one day than I used to do in three."

One of his daily employments was the "Carmen Nuptiale," which had been suspended in consequence of the dissolution of the betrothals between the Princess Charlotte and the Prince of Orange. A marriage contract was subsequently entered into between Leopold of Saxe-Cobourg and Gotha and the Princess Charlotte, and to celebrate these nuptials he determined to continue this poem, to which he gave the title of "The Lay of the Laureate." His article on La Vendée, which had been delayed by the death of his son, was pressed forward, and the second volume of the "History of Brazil" continued with equal energy.

After a short excursion during the early part of the autumn of this year—which included a visit to his friend Nash at Lowther, and another to Wordsworth—Southey was prepared to receive the Lakers, or those tourists who, during this season of the year, delight to refresh themselves with the pure breath of the mountain and the picturesque scenery of the lakes. Amongst

these was Owen of Lanark,—a man whom Southey, in his “Colloquies,” placed among the triad of benefactors to the human race,—the other two being Clarkson and Dr. Bell. With the more practicable part of his scheme, especially whatever encouraged education, or gave promise of a greater degree of comfort in the cottages of the poor, it is evident, from many passages in his writings, that Southey strongly sympathised. He imagined that both these objects were neglected in the manufacturing districts, and that our looms were the hot-beds of vice as well as the causes of destitution. Half a century has greatly improved the condition of the population of these districts; and the recent regulations of our commerce have given an impetus to trade, and a spirit to progress, which, judiciously directed, cannot but lead to the greater stability and prosperity of the whole nation.

CHAPTER XVI.

Lord Liverpool—Southey requested to meet the Prime Minister—Means of suppressing Sedition—Observations on the Moral and Political State of England—Herbert Knowles—Academy of Madrid—Royal Institution of Amsterdam—Wat Tyler—The Times Newspaper—Tour on the Continent—Lakers.

ÆTAT. 42-44.

THE extraordinary expenses which had been incurred during the late wars, the heavy taxation which still pressed upon the people, and the depressed state of the agricultural and manufacturing interests—which created insolvencies in every part of the kingdom—combined to render England the theatre of tumultuary meetings, the natural attendants on mis-government. The extreme parties took advantage of these circumstances to propose their doctrines of government, and the classes who had so long monopolised power felt themselves in danger.

In the midst of this confusion Southey received a communication, through Grosvenor Bedford, that Lord Liverpool desired an interview with him, and for that

purpose he was requested immediately to repair to London. It was evident that the Prime Minister wished to find some means of inoculating the opinions of Government amongst the people, and thereby secure a sufficient power to enable him to carry those measures he thought necessary for the tranquillity of the kingdom. To this communication Southey answered cautiously, even reluctantly, though we see him intimating that a gagging system would be the most probable means of suppressing the evils originated "by the incessant corrupting of men's minds by the revolutionary, the infidel, the immoral part of the press." It is melancholy to observe a literary man, who must have understood all the blessings of freedom of discussion, wilfully endeavouring to deprive a portion of his fellow-citizens, who differed from him, of those blessings.

The apprehension that some great national convulsion was about to disrupt society was, however, extensively spread at that time; even the moderate Rickman, who had so often combated the high prejudices and fears of Southey himself, seemed influenced by these disagreeable prognostications. Few men have the power of seeing into the future; and this frightened Liberal, who thus misrepresented his fellow-citizens, would, perhaps, not have been satisfied by the anodyne measure in which that agitation resulted. Rickman corresponded with Southey on this subject; and it is curious to see two able men exciting in one another what we now know

to have been mere old women's apprehensions. The poet and historian, it is true, felt how futile any attempt to guide or misguide public opinion by the influence of a government press would be ; and deplored the pass to which things had come, and talked of " looking abroad for a place where he might rest his head in safety ! "

The result of Lord Liverpool's communication with Southey extended no further, however, than his preparing " Observations upon the Moral and Political State of England," by which he hoped to counteract the opinions that were rapidly spreading among, and inflaming the minds of, the people. The Government, to appease the spirit of discontent, were compelled to reduce the taxation ; ministers and officers of state submitted to a reduction of their salaries ; the Prince Regent himself gave up temporarily the 50,000*l.* per annum granted for his personal expenses ; special commissions were issued to try those engaged in tumultuous proceedings, and summary punishments were inflicted upon such of the political enemies of the Government as had been provoked into excesses. Thus, by small concessions and " strong measures," the Government secured its authority ; and Southey fully sympathised with them in their violent proceedings against the rioters, and became — it must be confessed, with reason — still more an object of popular reprobation.

It is pleasing to turn from the tumult of political

strife and apprehension to the quiet precincts of Greta Hall, and view Southey in the exercise of his domestic duties and the calmer charities of life, for which he was alike fitted by nature. Whilst his attention was distracted by the disturbed state of his country, he had been exerting himself in behalf of an entire stranger, but whose position recommended him at once to his sympathy. Herbert Knowles was an orphan youth of great promise. When a mere boy, he was placed at Richmond School (Yorkshire) by Dr. Andrews, dean of Canterbury, and other clergymen, who promised him 20*l.* a-year, provided his friends and relations could contribute 30*l.* per annum towards his education. It was further intended, when he was thoroughly qualified, to send him to Cambridge, to give full scope to the developement of his abilities. He was scarcely within a twelvemonth of the period for his removal when the scheme was defeated by the pecuniary embarrassments of his relations, who were unable to continue the stipulated sum.

Knowles, in this unfortunate dilemma, wrote a poem, with the object of publishing it, but previously had it transmitted to Southey, with a request that it might be dedicated to him. In reply, Southey dissuaded him from the step, but endeavoured to make up the deficit of the 30*l.* by subscriptions amongst his own friends, readily putting down his own name for 10*l.* per annum. His first applications were unsuccessful ; but eventually

Mr. Rogers and Lord Spencer afforded equally between them the amount required.

The glad tidings of this success were quickly communicated by Southey to his young *protégé*, who acknowledged, in a feeling letter, his sentiments of gratitude. He, at the same time, modestly declined to accept the proffered assistance, if his patrons expected from him any extraordinary efforts of study, or that he should make any very distinguished figure in the University. Feelingly adverting to the consuming energies which wasted the frame and constitution of Kirke White, the exercise of which was unduly stimulated by injudicious persons, who desired to see him enter the arena of collegiate competition, he compares the poverty of his own attainments with the extent of learning requisite to obtain academic honours. He adds, too, the weakness of his constitution, and concludes:—"Could I twine, to gratify my friends, a laurel with a cypress, I would not repine; but to sacrifice the little inward peace of mind which the wreck of passion has left behind, and relinquish every hope of future excellence and future usefulness in one wild, *unavailing* pursuit, were indeed a madman's act, and worthy of a madman's fate. . . . But I will not be idle."

However, as it was in the case of Kirke White and young Dusatoy, so was it with this youth. The feebleness of his health proved too great for the activity of his mind and requirements of study. Within two months

from the date of his last letter, the mournful intelligence of his death was communicated to Southey by the headmaster of the Richmond School.

The Academy of Madrid had some time previously conferred upon Southey the honour of membership, and desired to express thereby the estimation in which they held his services to the cause and literature of Spain, as well as to testify their admiration of his high literary talents. Nor was this an empty honour. It gave him the same privileges which the members of the Royal House hold and enjoy, and afforded him a better access into the national libraries of that country, and the manuscripts and archives of the Escorial, than any foreigner had hitherto possessed. In the present year a similar testimony of regard was shown him by the Royal Institution of Amsterdam, which enrolled him a member of their body. These marks of respect, at all times gratifying, were peculiarly soothing to his spirit, for they came when he was beset on all sides by men who considered him a legitimate object of vituperation, and imputed the origin of his opinions to mercenary causes.

We come now to an occurrence that gave Southey far greater notoriety than he could otherwise have expected to obtain, and enabled his enemies to enjoy a temporary triumph over him. In the early part of the year 1817 appeared a poem by Robert Southey, Poet-laureate, entitled "Wat Tyler," containing highly democratic sentiments.

The circumstances of this affair are simply stated. When in the height of his Pantisocratic schemes, and full of Socialist feelings, Southey struck off the above poem, the manuscript of which his brother-in-law, Robert Lovell, took to London, and placed in the hands of Mr. Ridgway, a publisher. When Southey visited the metropolis shortly afterwards, he called upon this person, whom he found in Newgate, in the same apartment with the Rev. Mr. Winterbottom, a dissenting minister. It was then, however, agreed that "Wat Tyler" should be published anonymously; but from some cause the MS. was never printed, and, being left in the hands of the publisher, entirely escaped the memory of Southey.

When the surreptitious publication appeared, Southey was naturally anxious to reclaim it; and for that purpose, with the advice of his friends, applied for an injunction. Lord Eldon, however, refused to grant this protection, on the plea that "a person cannot recover damages upon a work which in its nature is calculated to do injury to the public." This decision of the court encouraged the venders of this poem to redouble their efforts, and not less than 60,000 copies are supposed to have been sold during the excitement it created.

To place the matter in its proper light, and to vindicate his own conduct, Southey wrote to the "Courier" a letter, that fully detailed the circumstances of its production, and apologised for the liberal sentiments con-

tained in the poem, on the plea that it was a youthful production.

The only variation from the account given by Southey, was that communicated by Mr. Forster to Mr. Cottle, which appeared in his "Reminiscences of Southey and Coleridge." It reiterates the general circumstances, and would, if possible, exonerate Mr. Winterbottom from the charge of having been guilty of its surreptitious publication. The statement narrates that this gentleman being on a visit to some friends at Worcester, took the MS. of "Wat Tyler" with him, to read for the amusement of the company, who shared in the popular feeling of dislike for Southey, in his political character. At this house were two other persons, who obtained possession of the manuscript privately, and sat up all night transcribing it, without the knowledge of Mr. Winterbottom. Through their hands, we are to presume, the copy eventually reached the publisher's. This account Mr. Forster declares was given him by one of the transcribers.

It might have been supposed, that when the proceedings before the Lord Chancellor had terminated the matter would have rested quietly, and been allowed to die a natural death; but the author of the poem of it was too conspicuous a personage. The subject was twice brought before parliament; once by Lord Brougham, and again by Mr. William Smith, the member for Norwich. The latter came down to the House

with "Wat Tyler" in one hand and a "Quarterly Review" in the other. Extracting passages that balanced well one against the other, he opened fire upon the poet-laureate, and concluded by inquiring of the Government why no proceedings had been instituted against its author?

This harangue was replied to by several of Southey's friends, and especially by Mr. Wynn, who explained the way in which the work was published, and vindicated the conduct and character of its author. Southey was further gratified by a letter from Mr. Wilberforce, stating that he could not feel satisfied until he had informed him that he was not in the House at the time that the attack was made upon him, or he would not have allowed the occasion to pass without speaking a word in his defence. But to the attack Southey himself wrote a reply in the "Courier," addressed to Mr. William Smith, in which he vindicates himself with great warmth, and less calmness and moderation, than, perhaps, the dignity of a philosopher required.

During the controversy about "Wat Tyler," an incident occurred which shows how deeply Southey was wedded to his present habits, and how entirely repugnant to his feelings was the idea of change. It also shows how high a value was set upon the power and energy of his writings. This was a proposal to superintend a lucrative literary establishment, in which, if he pleased, he might have a property. The emolu-

ment, it stated, would be considerable ; and the influence which he would possess in the political world extensive. This offer he knew to originate in Mr. Walter, of the "Times;" and it was intended that Southey should write the leading article for the journal, and exercise, perhaps, some general authority over the whole paper. The salary would have been 2000*l.* a-year, with such a share in the profits of the business as would have led to an easy and speedy independence. This offer was, however, declined. The associations which bound Southey to Keswick were too strong, and there appeared to be no consideration that could allure him from its scenes.

The habits which Southey had contracted ever since his first literary engagements were hostile to his enjoyment of perfect health, and the intensity with which he had lately applied himself to writing, and kept his pen incessantly employed, had further debilitated his constitution, and increased symptoms which began to alarm his friends. For several months of the year there was no society at Keswick which could induce him to relax his labours, and the routine he pursued was continual, close, and unbroken. It was therefore thought necessary to divert his mind from intercourse with books and dead authors, by inducing him to mingle with the living mankind. A tour on the Continent was accordingly planned, as being likely to supply the most

striking objects of attraction, and exciting an exercise which was equally requisite for his recovery.

The party which accompanied him consisted of his friends, Mr. Senhouse, and Nash the artist. Their route lay across France to Switzerland, and from thence through Cisalpine Gaul, back again to Switzerland into Belgium.

The early part of this journey through the French territory was, with a few exceptions, flat and uninteresting; but as the gigantic Alps rose upon his view, all the excitement of the poet and the tourist awoke within him. At Neufchâtel, Southey took up his temporary abode in a house upon the shore of the lake. In some parts of his journey, especially in his passage over the Jura, Southey was reminded so forcibly of scenes in Cumberland, that he could easily have imagined himself within an hour's walk of his own home. From Neufchâtel, he proceeded to Yverdun, although it was not in his direct road, to visit the celebrated Pestalozzi. Here he remained long enough to acquire the principal features of the new system, and examine the scenery around. Lausanne and Ferney were his next stages,—shrines which the literary pilgrim could not slightly pass by,—spots beautiful beyond description, memoried by names

“Who sought and found, by dangerous roads,
A path to perpetuity of fame;”

where Voltaire and Gibbon composed their most celebrated works. From Geneva, our traveller passed across Mount Cenis into Lombardy, but turned aside from Chamberry to visit the Convent of the Grand Chartreuse, the sublime scenery of which was, in his opinion, the most splendid of any he had yet seen during his tour. Having visited Milan, where, in addition to viewing its attractions, he bought some valuable books, he went to Como, and was gratified by finding there his friend W. S. Landor, with whom he remained three days. At Lugano, so delighted was he with the situation, the character of the scenery, and the softness of the climate, that he felt, were there no other causes of exception, it was there he would like to pitch his tent for the remainder of his days. Having crossed the lake, he entered the Simplon road. A glorious Alpine descent brought him into the Valais, the land of goîtres and crétins, which he found more numerous here than in the Maurienne. At Martigny a halt was made, in order to enable him and his party to cross over to Chamouny, where they had a full view of Mont Blanc in its most solitary and majestic glory.

Returning by the Tête Noir, which they passed on their road to Chamouny, and passing by Vevey and Lausanne, the travellers rested at Echichens for three days; then they went to Berne, and from thence struck into the Oberland, and travelled by land and water ten days, slept on the Rhigi, and halted at

Zürich. They made for home through the Black Forest, Frankfort, and Mentz, down the left bank of the Rhine to Cologne, and on to Brussels. Here Southey could not resist making large purchases of books, and amongst others the "Acta Sanctorum." From the capital of Belgium to England and Keswick the transit was easy and short.

Upon his return, Southey found the Lakers again around him, and he was compelled to continue the "idleness" which his tour had commenced. Among the company who visited the mountains and waters of Cumberland this year was his old friend and school-fellow Grosvenor Bedford, who made a stay of some weeks at Keswick. For a short time his hearth had also been enlivened by the presence of John Rickman. These friends could seldom make it practicable to reach so far as Greta Hall during their annual excursions, and this gave to their hurried and occasional visits, when they did occur, a peculiar charm, and called into exercise the warmest feelings of mutual estimation and regard.

CHAPTER XVII.

Offer of Librarianship of the Advocates' Library, Edinburgh—
His present Powers, his future Prospects—Birth of a Son—
Method of Study—History of Brazil—Visit to Scotland—
John Morgan—Bequest of a Lunatic—Biographical Hoax—
Life of Wesley—Visit to Wales—Degree of LL. D.—Literary
Labours—Shelley—Life of George Fox—Death of Nash
the Artist—Roderic, dernier Roi des Goths—Death of Miss
Tyler.

IN the spring of 1818, a situation, with a salary of 400*l.* per annum, was offered to Southey, which seems at first adapted to his previous habits and known desires. This was the office of Librarian to the Advocates' Library at Edinburgh, with the labour of making a catalogue alone attached to it. His refusal to accept so advantageous a post—a post that in the earlier part of his life he would have considered adequate to his largest ambition—shows how firmly rooted all his associations for Keswick had become. He was also reluctant to remove further from his friends; and the remuneration he received for his labours—and there was no lack of employment—was as fair as he could expect.

But there were times when Southey regarded the possibility of a paralysis of his powers, either mental or physical, with painful sensibility. The mind is subject to as many influences and has as many causes of derangement as the body, and it was frequently a source of wonder as well as of gratitude to him that his intellectual faculties had preserved their strength unimpaired, notwithstanding the extraordinary exertions to which they had been applied. When he reflected on these subjects his spirit was depressed, and in a letter to Grosvenor Bedford he forcibly embodies his feelings and apprehensions, and concludes, that if the day had hitherto been sufficient for the labour as well as the labour for the day, it might not always be so ; and how desirable it was to make some permanent provision for the future.

What Southey then so strongly represented of himself may with equal propriety be applied to all those who depend upon literature for their support. The apprehension that their intellectual day may not be co-existent with the day of life, that mental powers may be exhausted before the frame of the body be worn out, that they may eventually be stranded upon the rocks of destitution, not unfrequently arises in their mind ; and it is then that they feel most poignantly how little provision has been made by their country for men who have devoted their best energies to the advancement of its highest interests.

Another son, his last child, was now born to him.

The memory of his beloved Herbert had never slumbered. Though his spirits had retained their former strength, they had lost their buoyancy for ever. The intelligence of this event—so strongly was his heart with his early favourite—was received by him as one conscious of the acquisition of a treasure, but who at the same time felt that the capacity of enjoying it was gone. After seeing the flower of his earthly hopes cut down, he looked forward, he tells Sir Walter, rather with dread than hope to such an issue. The gift, however, was received with gratitude.

The third and last volume of his "History of Brazil"—his *opus majus*, a work on which he hoped to base the remembrance of his name—was now published. It must appear astonishing, if not incredible, how the head and hands of one man could accomplish so much as the collection of Southey's works evinces that he has performed. Not alone epics, poems, and ballads sufficient to fill volumes, but biographies, histories, innumerable articles, lengthy reviews, with an immense accumulation of correspondence, abstracts, and journals, testify to his indefatigable assiduity. But the true secret is found in a judicious disposition of his time and subjects, and the regularity with which he applied himself to each.

Southey had never been higher north than Edinburgh and Ashestiel; and as the autumn, the season for relaxation, had again commenced its course, he de-

terminated upon a more extensive tour through Scotland. A strong inducement to the choice of this direction might be found in the opportunity it afforded him of enjoying the company of his friend John Rickman, who, with Mr. Selford, were taking the same route.

Leaving Edinburgh, which he had previously visited, Southey passed by Loch Katrine, Dunkeld, and Dundee, along the east coast to Aberdeen. From Aberdeen he proceeded to Banff and Inverness, and as far north as Fleet Mound, from which might be seen the Ord of Caithness. By this road all the lakes and mountains of this coast, and some portion of the exquisite scenery of Perthshire, were admired. Crossing from Dingwall to the Western Sea, and taking the line of the Caledonian Canal, he came down by the wild and stupendous fastnesses of the Highland Hills, by Ben Nevis, Fort William, and Loch Awe, across Ballachulish Ferry to Inverary and Loch Fyne. Having visited Loch Lomond and Glasgow, he returned home, after having been absent about seven weeks. Not only had he been able to see the greater part of Scotland, but he had been able to see it under the most favourable auspices, the weather having been throughout remarkably propitious. The journey was rapid, yet Southey allowed no opportunity of obtaining information to escape him. He took minute notes, and kept a regular journal. Health was not the only object he proposed to himself in a tour of this kind. He made it subser-

vient to higher purposes ; and if he could extract from what he observed and learnt matter of utility for his future works, and which he hoped would be beneficial to mankind, he always felt that a more important duty was performed.

An instance of a reverse of fortune was about this time made known to Southey, which excited his warmest sympathy. John Morgan—for that was the name of the unfortunate applicant—had been reduced from wealth to a most indigent condition, suffering at the same time under a stroke of palsy. His wife had accepted the situation of mistress of a national school, with a salary of 40*l.* per annum. To relieve his distress, Charles Lamb had agreed to pay 10*l.* a year, and Southey readily proposed to add a similar sum as long as he lived, and, by calling the attention of his friends to the case, create a fund for him still more permanent. Southey considered that there was a peculiar claim to his assistance in this instance. The mother of John Morgan had shown him repeated acts of kindness in his early days, and had often invited him to dinner (gratitude forbid him to forget it) when, but for her consideration, he must have gone without one.

A curious bequest was about this time made to Southey by a lunatic who had committed suicide—the charge of all his papers. The circumstances that led to the assignment mark not only the sympathy that Southey extended to the unfortunate, but how well his compas-

sionate spirit was known and reposed in. This person was but casually acquainted with Southey; but in the year 1819 he wrote two letters, requesting the Laureate to accept the charge of his papers. Southey, from the tone of the letter, imagining that his correspondent was in the last stage of some fatal disease, took an opportunity of infusing into his letter some of that consolation which religion at once suggests and supplies, for the comfort of the presumed sufferer. Hearing nothing further at the time, Southey supposed that his last letter had given offence. Such, however, was not the case. After the lunatic's decease, the letter was found preserved amongst his papers; and the commission with which he entrusted Southey sufficiently explains that no exception had been taken.

Southey received another gratuitous testimony of the estimation in which his services were regarded. Lord Bathurst, totally ignorant of the number and ages of his children, called upon the Right Hon. Mr. Croker to offer, through him, a writership for his son. The eldest, had he been living, would have been too young; the other was a mere infant: yet such spontaneous offices of consideration were highly gratifying to Southey's feelings.

On the death of the king, which occurred early in this year (1820), the press teemed with biographies of his late majesty, all of various characters and different authority. Amongst those that were first issued, Southey

was surprised to find one edition to which his own name had been prefixed. The advertisement announced,—“The Life of the King, by Robert Southy. Printed in Sixpenny Numbers, at J. Jones's, Warwick Square.” This palpable evasion of nominal property Southey repelled by a paragraph in the “Westmoreland Gazette,” and by a letter to Messrs. Longman and Co., who, he wisely judged, would know better how to proceed in the business than himself. There was a misprint of his name—Southey being spelt Southy—by which the publishers, doubtlessly, expected to escape the letter of the law. Leaving it in the hands of the “Fathers of the Row,” he gave himself no further anxiety concerning it.

The “Life of Wesley” was brought to a close in the course of this year, and met with a good reception. That a work coming from the hands of a High Churchman would meet entirely the approbation of all parties, was an anomaly not to be anticipated; but the popularity which it has attained evidences the worth of the volumes, both with respect to the subject-matter of the book, as well as the temper in which it was treated. It not only ranks amongst the best of his productions, but is regarded as one of the most complete specimens of biography in the English language. “It is written in too fair a spirit,” remarks Southey, “to satisfy any set of men.” Therefore, we might add, it has been written for the world. Where class or party-writing prevails, the result must be ephemeral. Mankind re-

fuses to adopt it, and it becomes at last the disinherited. Had Southey but believed in this when he wrote his poems, how different, probably, would have been their fate! Those which are most esteemed are those which embrace to the largest extent the sympathies of mankind; those that are rejected are those which were dictated by a spirit of partisanship,—a Muse of Discord, in which nature is inverted.

In the April, May, and June of this year, Southey made a tour into Wales, and took up his head-quarters at Llangedwin, the country-seat of his friend Wynn. One of the guests at Llangedwin was Reginald Heber, afterwards the celebrated Missionary Bishop of Calcutta, with whom he formed an acquaintance which was not forgotten on either side, though the vast waters of two oceans were soon to roll between them, and a space of several thousand miles to interrupt their communication. On his return Southey passed through London and visited his old friends, made a short stay with his uncle at Streatham, and proceeded to Oxford, where the honorary degree of Doctor of Civil Law was about to be bestowed upon him. This was the highest mark of honour which the University had it in their power to confer, and the ceremony was performed with the usual courtesies and congratulations. He had not been in Oxford for six-and-twenty years before, and it may be easily imagined that the feelings with which he revisited it were of a very opposite character. Many of

those friends with whom he had trod its pleasant walks were gone to their final resting-place. If he regarded himself, he might perceive a great change in his thoughts, in his position, and in his prospects. The lapse of years could not, he remarks, be a melancholy consideration to one who was looking forward for the day which would bring him to a better world. And with such feelings, the honours that were awarded him seemed little better than vanity.

It has already been stated, that for some time during the year 1812 Shelley had become a resident in Keswick, and a frequent visitor at Greta Hall. This intimacy had been interrupted by absence, as Shelley shortly after left Cumberland for the Continent. On Southey's return from London on this occasion, he found a letter awaiting him from the young poet, dated at Pisa. It intimated that he had been assured by his friends that he was the author of some severe criticism upon him and his poems in the "Quarterly Review." It expressed a perfect consciousness on his own part, both from the internal evidence, and what he had known of him at Keswick, that the paper was not written by Southey; and then requested a written denial, for the satisfaction of his friends, since it was his determination to challenge the writer, if he should be a person with whom it would not be beneath him to contend. Shelley also demanded a reply, as in case of silence he should interpret it into a confession of guilt. The article in

question was not written by Southey, who was, therefore, enabled to comply satisfactorily with the somewhat peremptory request of his friend.

The "Life of Wesley" having met with so favourable a reception, Southey was induced to undertake the "Life of George Fox," and had already commenced collecting his materials. It was intended to embrace a summary view of the religious and irreligious dissensions in England, from the rise of the Lollards to the origin of Quakerism, as well as to give a comparative survey of society now and at that early period. Although much progress was made, and the plan of the work arranged, it was never completed, owing to the pressure of other engagements, which continually increased upon him, until his mental faculties had become exhausted and the lamp of the mind entirely burnt out.

Towards the close of 1820 died the friend and fellow-traveller of Southey—Nash the artist. Their acquaintance commenced in Belgium in 1815, and from that time he was a familiar household guest, during the summer months, at Greta Hall, and a favourite both with young and old. He formed one of the party on the pilgrimage to Waterloo, and subsequently accompanied Southey on his tour through Switzerland and the North of Italy. His leisure was employed in taking sketches of the most striking and interesting portions of their journey; and it is to his pencil that we are indebted for the views of

Hougomont, Ligny, Les Quatre Bras, &c., that illustrate the poet's "Pilgrimage." For him, and his fellow-artist, Westall, who was also a frequent guest and familiar friend at Keswick, Southey entertained the most sincere regard.

The new year was scarcely opened when Southey was flattered by the presentation of a volume entitled "Roderic, dernier Roi des Goths: poëme, traduit de l'Anglais de Robert Southey, Esq., poëte-lauréate, par M. le Chevalier —," printed at Versailles, and published in Paris by Galignani. Madame St.-Anne Holmes, a lady of large fortune, and who had been intimate with the great Sheridan, between whom and Southey a slight literary correspondence had taken place, had persuaded M. le Chevalier de Sagné to undertake the translation of it. But the matter did not rest here. A letter accompanied the parcel, detailing the origin of a life of Southey, which prefaced the work, and apologising for any omissions or misrepresentations that might occur. This letter communicated, after an apology, that the printer and publisher, M. Le Bell, of the Royal Printing-office, Versailles, would not consent to the publication of the translation without a life of the author, since the French must be interested in a writer before they will read his works. It further stated that the publishers became so importunate that Madame St. Holmes was obliged to send to London for all the lives of the poet-laureate that had been published; and by

these, and as well as assisted by remembering some anecdotes which she had heard from her friend R. B. Sheridan, they had managed to compile a biographical notice. This notice, which was thus compounded, had, according to Southey's testimony, scarcely a single point of accuracy, and not a few that were ridiculously false.*

Miss Tyler, who formed so important a feature in Southey's early career, now died, in her eighty-second year, and was buried in the burial-place of her ancestors, in the Vale of Ashton, where the father, brothers, and sisters of Southey also slept. It is melancholy to reflect, that the aunt and the nephew had never met since that eventful night when the latter was turned adrift upon the world by the fury of her pitiless temper. The estrangement had continued for nearly thirty years; and looking back upon her conduct after this lapse of time, Southey felt that his affection for her had been long and justly cancelled.

* The following reply, taken down verbatim, brought Madame St. Holmes to terms. The publisher writes, in answer to her declaration that she knew nothing of Dr. Southey's life:—
"N'importe! écrivez toujours! brodez, brodez! —là un peu que ce soit vrai ou non, ce ne fait rien; qui prendra la peine de s'informer?"

CHAPTER XVIII.

Death of George III.—Vision of Judgment—The Critics—America—Mr. Ticknor—American Literature—Book of the Church—Dr. Channing—Rev. G. Benson—Gifford—Domestic Expenses—Visit to London—Charles Lamb and the Quarterly Review—Criticism and Remarks on "Elia"—Rowland Hill—Present of a Bible—Journey to the West—Wesleyan Methodism and Church Government—Morning Chronicle, Southey, and Mr. H. Taylor—The Book of the Church and the Romanists—Testimonies in its favour—*Vindiciæ Ecclesiæ Anglicanæ*.

ÆTAT. 47–51.

On the 29th of January, 1820, at the venerable age of eighty-two, died George III., a prince whose virtues have been as needlessly exalted by one party as his faults and failings have been exaggerated by the other. So steadily had the infirmities of time been creeping upon him, and so perceptible were the stages of his dissolution, that the death of the king had been anticipated as a probable and speedy event, and the mind of the nation prepared for the occurrence. Southey, participating in the general expectation, had been engaged

for some time previously upon an elegy, or monody, in commemoration of the occasion, and now gave himself up vigorously to its completion. The plan of the poem was adopted from Dante, and the metre was borrowed from the Latin hexameter,—a metre well known to classical students, but seldom attempted in the English language. In fact, wherever the attempt has been made, it has always proved a failure;* for, however natural the feelings expressed—however rich the imagery employed—however chaste the diction—however pure and exalted the sentiments—however effective the positions—the poem has always suffered from the metrical fetters by which it is constrained, and their inadaptability to the genius of the English language.

The subject chosen by Southey for his new poem was the apotheosis, or ascension into heaven, of the late king. A subject more presumptuous or irreverent it is difficult to conceive. Nor did the manner of its execution relieve the daring of the undertaking. Its composition evinced a gross defect in delicacy of taste and feeling. The circumstances of our future condition are wisely hidden from our knowledge, or only sufficiently

* I wish I could exempt Longfellow's "Acadie" from this imputation; but beautiful as are his pictures, touching as his pathos is, he has accomplished nothing more in his hexameters than giving us the opportunity of saying that he has done a bad thing well. The "Vision of Judgment," also, should rank high as far as the execution of the metre is concerned, but what is it?

revealed—and that in general terms—that we may press forward with patience and hope to the prize of our high calling. Southey, however, on this occasion, enters boldly into the arena of the courts of heaven, arraigns before its bar all the political offenders of the previous century, and fearlessly condemns or rewards them according as their opinions coincide with his private judgment or not. In language little temperate, he paints the confusion of his adversaries, and seems to enjoy an indecent pleasure in their imaginary consternation.

The appearance of the "Vision of Judgment" was not only the signal for hostile critics "to lay on," but it was an occasion of regret to the most attached and best of his friends. He had determinately made it a political composition; and his aim and purpose was to lash his opponents, and "pay them back in kind" some of the abuse they had lavished upon him. The appellation of "Satanic School," which he applied to those who formed their style on that of Byron, offended them as far as the wit of man could devise, and perpetuated the enmity which had already existed so long between them.

Southey foreknew the bitterness of feeling this poem would create against him, and, in a spirit of unworthy exultation, writes:—"What a grand bespattering of abuse I shall have when the 'Vision' appears! Your walk at the proclamation was but a type of it—only that I am booted, and coated, and of more convenient stature

for the service. Pelt away, my boys! pelt away! If you were not busy at that work, you would be about something more mischievous. Abusing me is like flogging a whipping-post!"

Whatever political errors Southey may have entertained —and I have not been partial to conceal them— it is also certain that much was attributed to him of which he was perfectly innocent. Whenever a more severe or cutting article than usual appeared in the "Quarterly Review," it was at once set down as the production of his pen, whatever might be the subject, or whatever line of policy it recommended for adoption. By this means many false doctrines were attributed to him, many unjust critiques, and in many instances, opinions the very reverse to those he was known by his friends to hold. Thus his views of the American Republic were never understood; nor the admiration with which he regarded their noble struggles, and the energy with which they carried their name and their commerce to every quarter of the globe. Many papers which had appeared in the "Quarterly Review," manifesting an unfriendly feeling towards the people of the United States, were thus appropriated to him; and the transatlantic world was led into erroneous opinions respecting his feelings towards them. Notwithstanding this, Greta Hall received many an American who, in the course of his travels through England, could not resist making a pilgrimage to the Poet of Keswick. Upon

these visitors Southey endeavoured to impress the injustice of such opinions respecting himself, and showed them every attention during their short stay. One of these travellers, a Mr. Ticknor, of Boston, and one of the most literary of his American visitors, now became his correspondent; and in the course of that correspondence he takes occasion to remark how desirous he was that the only two nations of the world who really were free, and had grown up in freedom, should be united by mutual respect and kindly feelings, as well as by kindred, common faith, and the indissoluble bond of language.

It has been stated, and pretty freely, that America possesses as yet no literature of her own; and this assertion, when made generally, must be admitted, though there have been some brilliant exceptions within the last few years. The reason is obvious. The attention of the American people has hitherto been too forcibly drawn to the cares of their government, the consolidation of their power, the extension of their commerce. The study of the arts and sciences never takes place in a nation until after a certain stage of its progress. The impulse, the leisure, and the capital are wanting. Under these circumstances it will be seen, that the views of Southey upon the literary condition of America were more liberal than many of those in advance of himself in liberal opinions in his own day.

The next works of any importance upon which Southey was engaged, were his "Book of the Church" and the "History of the War." As these were purposely written to express his peculiar views upon those subjects, and he was determined to press them with all the boldness of language he was master of, he naturally expected a bitter opposition from his political adversaries. It was about this time, too, that Mr. Gifford, having some thoughts of retiring from the editorship of the "Quarterly," made an offer of that post to Southey. This, however, he declined. In a pecuniary point of view, he did not feel that he should be benefitted. He was also too closely wedded to the retreat of Keswick, to be induced to leave it without some extraordinary necessity pressing upon him. Yet his financial position was by no means satisfactory to him. The proceeds of a new book were generally swallowed up before the work appeared. His annual expenditure he estimated at 600*l.*, and his only stated receipts were 200*l.*, which came from Messrs. Longman. What he derived from the Exchequer was devoted to his insurances; and the deficit had to be made up by dint of hard labour.

In the course of the summer of 1822 Southey received a visit from the celebrated Dr. Channing, and so much was he taken with his urbanity and talents, that he gave him a letter of introduction to the Rev. Christopher Benson, late Master of the Temple, to

whom he was but partially known. This circumstance indicates how strongly he felt the brotherhood of genius, and that its intercourse ought not to be interrupted by those forms of etiquette which regulate the intercourse of society in general.

Towards the close of the year 1823, Southey visited London, and during his sojourn there an incident occurred that, perhaps, more than any other in the course of his long life, served to exemplify the generous character of his disposition. For many years—in fact, as far back as 1797—a close intimacy had existed between him and Charles Lamb. Their correspondence was not frequent. The distance that separated their homes interrupted their familiar intercourse, yet their friendship was warm and their meetings mutually gratifying.

On several occasions the "Quarterly" had spoken disparagingly of Lamb's literary productions, and taken the unwarrantable license of personality, even insinuating that the "Confessions of a Drunkard" was a genuine description of the state of the writer. About the same time also appeared in the same Review a notice from the pen of Southey, of his "Essays upon Elia," in which the former remarked, that *it was a book which only wanted a sounder religious feeling to be as delightful as it was original*; an expression which Southey felt to be too severe, and intended to alter in the proof-sheets, which, by one of those casualties that frequently occurred to

him under Gifford's management, he had not the opportunity of doing, the proofs not being sent. Irritated by the previous imputations that had been cast upon his character, Lamb hastily sent a letter to the "London Magazine," October 1823, addressed to his old friend, and inveighing bitterly against the "want of religious feeling" imputed to him in his "Essays on Elia." He brought forward, as a *quid pro quo*, the familiar manner in which Southey introduced *diablerie* into his poetry. "The Old Woman of Berkeley," "The Devil's Walk," and others of a similar description, were not inaptly alluded to, to add weight to the censure, which he was willing should be felt, that an equal deficiency of religious feeling might be attributed to the author of such poems.

On Southey's arrival in London, a number of the magazine containing this review was put into his hand, and greatly was he grieved and surprised at its contents. Had Charles Lamb written to him and complained privately of the wrong done him in the "Quarterly," or taken a less premature step than that into which he was unwittingly seduced, the mist would have been cleared away, and himself spared the infliction of self-reproach. Knowing, however, the genuineness of Lamb's feelings, and that he must have been labouring under some delusion, Southey overlooked all the personal allusions contained in the letter, and immediately wrote an explanation.

He was not mistaken. Lamb felt deeply the irritability to which he had given way, wrote an immediate reply, and after alluding to the causes of his anger — the injury which the imputations upon his character might inflict upon him, as he was situated in a public office, — continued : “ I wish both ‘ Magazine ’ and ‘ Review ’ at the bottom of the sea. I shall be ashamed to see you (Southey had fixed a day for visiting his old friend), and my sister (though innocent) will be still more so, for this folly was done without her knowledge, and has made her uneasy ever since. My guardian angel was absent at the time.” It is needless to say that a perfect reconciliation took place, and that their friendship was but the more firmly cemented after its extraordinary ordeal.

During this stay in London, Southey heard Rowland Hill, whose manner he describes as being animated and striking, sometimes impressive and dignified, always remarkable ; and as the new year had opened he sent, as a memorial of the event, a Bible to his daughter, with a letter expressive of the hope that she would adopt the custom of reading, morning and evening, the proper Psalms and lessons of the day — not as a necessary and burthensome observance, binding in spite of every interruption, but as a rule which she would one day feelingly understand to be highly beneficial.

Southey, on leaving London, pursued his journey into the West ; and having visited his aged aunt, the

sole survivor of his father's family, at Taunton, and the Rev. Mr. Lightfoot at Crediton, he returned to Keswick early in 1824.

The "Book of the Church," a work in which Southey endeavoured to delineate the origin and developement of Christianity in England, and the establishment of our national institution of worship, had appeared, and congratulations upon the style and value of the book poured in upon him from several high quarters. The late Dr. Howley, then bishop of London, expressed his sense of its usefulness, and only regretted that its form prohibited it from being more widely extended. The Bishop of Durham expressed similar sentiments, but would have been better pleased had the work contained references to its authorities. But Southey excused himself on this point by stating, that when he first commenced the book it was intended for the use of schools; that, even when enlarged, it was a mere epitome; and that, under these circumstances, a display of authorities would have been out of place.

In the "Life of Wesley," which was generally admired, Southey had expressed a hope that it was not beyond the bounds of reason to expect that that numerous body, or the more moderate portion of it, might again be brought within the pale of the Establishment; and this idea was, on the part of some of the Wesleyans, reciprocated. It was evident to many of the reflecting minds amongst them, that the Wesleyism of John Wes-

ley and the Wesleyism of that period were very dissimilar. The *people*, who had performed many important functions in the administration of their church affairs according to the primitive system, had been excluded under modern arrangements. Their influence was therefore diminished, whilst the powers of their *ministers* had been much enlarged and become almost absolute. This state of things had caused a separation in that body; and Mr. Mark Robinson, reflecting upon this position, and especially the secession from their own body which had taken place in Ireland, wrote to Dr. Southey, communicating his desire, and that of many of those with whom he was associated, to put themselves under the direction of the Church of England, under the denomination of Church-Methodists, if some mutual arrangement could be made. A copy of this letter Southey forwarded to Dr. Howley, who, after explaining the difficulties of such an arrangement being immediately entered into in this country, continued: — “I am not, however, without hopes that in certain situations, more especially in parts of the colonies, a union of purpose and action may silently take place, which, under discreet management, would be productive of much advantage to the one great cause; but this must be effected by a prudent use of opportunities, and not, I think, by formal treaty.” The subject upon this, with the exception of an occasional communication with Mr. Mark Robinson, and a reference to it in the “Col-

loquies of Sir T. More," which gave it for the time a temporary impetus, was allowed to remain quiescent.

About this time a severe and unjust attack having appeared in the "Morning Chronicle" upon him, Southey thought that the ends of public and private justice would be more fully attained by prosecuting that paper for libel. Southey had always been averse to the liberty (he would call it licentiousness) of the press; and he conceived that on this occasion it had so far outstripped the bounds of propriety, that he might punish it for an abuse of its power. His legal friends, however, in whose control he rested the whole matter, advised him rather to allow the subject to drop, owing to the uncertainty of procuring a verdict. It may be presumed that this was as much in consequence of the comparisons that might be drawn with his own virulent productions, as from the surfeit of cases which the "Six Articles" of Castlereagh caused both to judge and jury. However, Mr. Henry Taylor, in the true spirit of friendship, took up his pen, and promptly replied, in a spirited and satisfactory letter, to the charges brought against him.

The favourable reception which the "Book of the Church" met with amongst the real friends and supporters of the Establishment, has already been alluded to. The obvious attack made in it upon the Roman faith and superstition roused the indignation of that church, which did not scruple of accusing the author of

falsifying history and misrepresenting its religion — an easy expedient. Amongst those who came forward with the fairest show of refuting it was Mr. Butler; and such was the insidious effect of his book, that Dr. Howley wrote to Southey to inquire if he intended to answer it, as it would be necessary to seek some person of ability to do so, the statements made in Mr. Butler's book having imposed upon some persons who *ought to have known better*. Upon this announcement Southey set himself diligently to work to prepare his "Vindiciæ Ecclesiæ Anglicanæ, the Book of the Church, vindicated and amplified;" in which his object was to attack the enemy "along the whole of his line."

Whilst engaged in this work he was disappointed to hear that his friend, the Rev. William Lisle Bowles, had desisted from the publication of some observations upon Mr. Butler's book, which he had begun; upon the intelligence that Southey was about to defend himself. The latter, however, urged him to resume his labour, upon the ground that "every answer would have a circle, within which no other could act with equal effect." Dr. Phillpotts, now Bishop of Exeter, was one of those who had undertaken to vindicate the "Book of the Church." He felt the necessity there existed of answering, in a detailed confutation, some of Mr. Butler's statements, of exposing the doctrine of his church, and revealing it in its true colours. This was more

especially a duty he considered due to the Church of England and the Protestants generally, since there had appeared so many different mis-statements, and apologies, and extenuations of the teaching of that communion.

CHAPTER XIX.

Journey to Holland and Belgium—Brussels—Antwerp—Is laid up at Leyden—Mr. Bilderjik—Lowland Hospitality—The Hague—Return to England—Literary Labours—A Second Visit to Holland—Death of his youngest Daughter—Is elected to sit in Parliament for the Borough of Downton—Garrick Papers—Foreign Quarterly—Visit to his Uncle—Engagements in London.

ÆTAT. 51-55.

To recruit his health, as well as to obtain some monastic works, which he felt it would be hopeless to search for in England, Southey determined upon a tour through Holland; nor was he less allured by the peculiar features of the country, and the historical associations connected with it. He knew, that instead of climbing mountains he would have to ascend church towers, and anticipated great delight from the panorama to be viewed from the summit of the steeple of Haarlem.

Having made his arrangements, he started from

London, in company with Mr. Henry Taylor, Mr. Neville White, and Mr. Arthur Malet, a young officer, by way of Dover, to Boulogne. From this city he directed his route to Brussels, and again crossed the memorable field of Waterloo. The memory of his former visit to that immortal spot came over him with a melancholy shadow. One who had been his companion upon that tour, Nash, the author of the sketches illustrative of his pilgrimage to Waterloo, was dead; another one, whose spirit had silently accompanied him during that long absence from home, and for whom it was his most pleasurable delight to collect some frail memorial of that fiery struggle—Herbert, his first and then only son, had gone, in the light and brilliancy of intellectual childhood, leaving him a bereaved heart. The momentary recurrence of the unblighted feelings which he then enjoyed, seemed only to show him how deep was his solitude; but after a short and painful indulgence of these memories he brushed them from his heart, and resumed his journey with his wonted cheerfulness.

While at Brussels he visited Verbeyist, the celebrated bookseller, from whom, in the year 1817, he had purchased the "*Acta Sanctorum*," and whom he found to be in a flourishing way of business. But this tour seemed destined to be diversified by manifold accidents. Previous to leaving England Southey had met with a slight injury upon the foot, the result of a tight

shoe. This incipient wound had become much inflamed by travelling during the hot weather; and at Bouchain it began to assume a serious appearance, having been bitten by one of those insects which too frequently disturb our midnight repose, and shall for the present be nameless. At Antwerp he was confined a prisoner to the house, but after a few days was enabled to proceed as far as Leyden, where he was again obliged to put himself under the surgeon's hand. So severe was the attack, that he endured more from that trifling cause in one week, than he remembered to have done during the whole of his previous life.

His position was, apparently, an unfortunate one; but productive, in reality, of far pleasanter consequences than might have been anticipated, by forcing him to become the recipient of one of those disinterested acts of kindness, which, while shedding respect upon the brow of genius, adorn that of humanity. The principal inducement Southey had held out for himself in visiting Leyden, was to introduce himself to Mr. Bilderjik and his wife, a poetess of great ability in her own country, and who had undertaken, and faithfully executed, the translation of the "Roderick, or the Last of the Goths." Upon his applying to them to procure lodgings during his detention they proposed their own home, and fortified the offer with such kind urgency and argument, that Southey, though reluctant, was compelled to comply. There he resided an invalid

upwards of three weeks, and received from the hospitality of his friend every attention that a warm heart and an admiration of his abilities could prompt, seconded most assiduously by a no less cordial and hospitable hostess. Of course this untoward circumstance broke up the travelling party, as it was uncertain how long the patient might be indisposed.

Accordingly Mr. Neville White and Mr. Malet pursued their own course towards Ghent, whilst Mr. Henry Taylor remained behind, to perform the faithful office of watching over the recovery and future movements of Southey.

This accident, however it may have caused a momentary disappointment and derangement of his plans, was, in fact, the means of introducing him to a more intimate acquaintance with his kind friends. He found them both, from heart and understanding, highly capable of contributing to his amusement. The manners as well as the conversation of Mr. Bilderjik were animated and engaging. He possessed a fund of original and interesting anecdote, and the language which he used—a mixture of Dutch and English—was drolly entertaining; and so feminine and domestic were the virtues of Mrs. Bilderjik, that Southey expresses his surprise that a person of such quiet and retiring habits should have been so successful an authoress.

In his new retreat, if we may so call it, Southey had

many opportunities of studying Dutch habits and manners, and many a curious after-picture presented itself. The breakfast to which he was invited, but of which, preferring bread and milk, he did not always partake, was punctually ready at eight, and consisted of coffee, cheese, butter, bread, &c. There were two sorts of cheese; one of which, the Leyden cheese, strong and highly flavoured with cinnamon and cloves, was laid between slices of bread and butter, and so eaten. About an hour before dinner he was regaled with a small tumbler of liquor, according to the custom of the country, to create an appetite. When that important meal arrived, he was in every respect prepared to eat whatever was placed before him, though the admixture of spices in everything cooked at first checked his assaults. Stewed apples, highly spiced and sweet, with roast fowl, and quinces with ragoûts, were a novelty to him. After dinner, coffee, an hour's rest, and supper at nine o'clock, completed the arrangements of the day as long as he could not move about.

As soon, however, as Southey was sufficiently recovered, he took, in company with his kind friend, short trips into the country. On one occasion he visited the Hague with Henry Taylor; inspected the Museum; called on one of his Dutch curmudgeons, an improvisatore poet, Mr. De Clerk; on another he settled his business with the bookseller; on a third he takes what Mr. Bilderjik pleasantly called a "walk" in the car-

riage; and on a fourth, drinks beer in a village which appears to be a place of rustic retreat for the fatigued and dust-soiled citizens of Leyden. When he left mutual regrets were expressed, nor were his host and hostess content to part with him until they had accompanied him in the *trekschuil* on his way to Haarlem. From Haarlem he proceeded to Amsterdam, from thence to England, which he reached after an absence of several weeks, in the beginning of August 1825.

On his return to Keswick, Southey again applied himself vigorously to his "*Vindiciæ Ecclesiæ Anglicanæ.*" The books which he had purchased in Holland were admirably adapted for his purpose. The rest of the year passed away in its usual manner—in receiving occasional visits from friends and tourists, diving into the recesses of ponderous volumes, or reviewing for the "*Quarterly.*" When the summer returned and brought back with it the season of recreation, he again made a tour through Holland, this time accompanied by Mr. Henry Taylor and Mr. Rickman, and visited his hospitable friends at Leyden.

On his return home, however, his glad welcome was turned into mourning. His youngest daughter had been since his absence laid upon a bed of sickness, and those who came to greet his return, came also to conduct him to the abode of gloom and apprehension.

"Well do I, though a child," writes his son, in editing his father's "*Life and Correspondence,*" "re-

member that return, as we hastened to meet him, and changed, by our sorrowful tidings, his cheerful smiles and glad welcome to tears and sadness. It was the first time I had seen sorrow enter that happy home, and those days of alternate hope and fear, when he paced the garden in uncontrollable anguish, and gathered us around him to prayer when all was over, are vividly impressed upon my mind."

Fatal symptoms, however, discovered themselves shortly after, and his worst misgivings were confirmed. When, however, the event did arrive, he exerted himself to control his own feelings and distress. He was most anxious for the effect which this bereavement might have upon the health of his wife. Yet, though he struggled to be tranquil, to subdue himself,—though he bent his spirit with Christian resignation to the stroke of this affliction,—he feared that the effort would have an injurious effect upon his constitution. This was doubtless the case.

Upon his return from Holland, and in the midst of this sorrow, Southey found awaiting him an invitation to accept a seat in Parliament; in fact, that he had been elected to represent the borough of Downton. The letter further proceeded to state that the grounds of his election were the opinions expressed in his "Book of the Church." The simple pledge that he would maintain those opinions in the House of Commons was all that was required of him.

This document was without signature, but the handwriting was recognised to be that of Lord Radnor, to whom Southey was an entire stranger. Southey felt at once how inconsistent a public life would be with his former habits, and his aversion to mingle much in society decided at once a step which Prudence herself could not but recommend. There were many pecuniary difficulties in the way, and his holding the office of poet-laureate was another disqualification, which he could not honourably get over.

It is true there were many loopholes by which he might have escaped the letter of the law, but the spirit alone was sufficient to bind him ; and he felt that, to a conscientious mind, the obligation of an oath is equally binding upon the least significant as well as the most important intentions of a statute. With a courteous acknowledgment of his lordship's kindness, and intimation to the Speaker that his election was null and void, the matter would have ended, had he not been told that a plan was formed for purchasing a qualification, and giving him an estate of 300*l.* a-year. In this movement it was always understood that Sir R. H. Inglis, who has always proved a steady and unflinching friend of the Church Establishment, took a leading part ; and it was intended not only to command the services of Southey in a parliament in which it was evident the grand struggle between the Government and the Catholics would take place, but also as a testimony of the admiration

which he and his party entertained of the extraordinary abilities, fearless intrepidity, and unwearied zeal of Southey in his defence of the Church and State. This again was insufficient to induce Southey to quit his private position and "enter into public life, at an age when a wise man would think of retiring from it."

When we take into consideration the pecuniary difficulties under which he always laboured, the apprehensions of the future which always overshadow his present enjoyment, and the fondness with which he looked forward to a time when he might be placed above the necessity of assiduous daily toil, honourable as it was, we cannot but admire the impartiality with which Southey weighed in the balance of his judgment the chances of his greater usefulness in a public or private sphere, and the firmness with which he adhered to that decision, which mature consideration had convinced him was most beneficial for his country and his own reputation.

A proposition was made to him to undertake the arrangement of the "Garrick Papers," a labour which he expressed himself willing to engage in,—not, however, for the love of the subject, but for the lucre of gain. In fact, his studies were at that time very inappropriate for the undertaking. A medley of works crowded his table, which he could not help smiling at when he accepted the offer. Here a Portuguese poem on the merits of the Virgin Mary, there a volume or

two from the works of some of the most eminent divines; in one place lay books upon the Council of Trent and the Tutelary Deities of Popish Christendom; in another, Reports upon Emigration, and Phenomena of the Dead; whilst volumes of the Acts of the Saints and of Baronius were scattered about amongst the others.

Southey, full of occupation as he unreluctantly was, had his labours further increased by a new engagement upon the "Foreign Quarterly,"—a review which had just been started. He was at first offered ten guineas a sheet, upon the plea of its being a young periodical; but as these terms did not meet the demands of Southey, an offer of one hundred pounds per article was politely made; and he accordingly prepared one upon the Moorish History of Spain for the first number. At this time, also, the Royal Society of Literature voted him a gold medal.

The questions of National Education and the removal of the Catholic Disabilities had been for some time, and was then, agitating the country. Southey felt strongly upon both these subjects. The deep research which he had gone into respecting the history of the Roman Church, and the direct tendency of its institutions, had long made him regard with fearful forebodings any concessions that might be granted to it. A period of upwards of twenty years has elapsed, and the question is more formidably brought forward than ever in confirmation of out his prediction, that the Church of Rome will

not, cannot, according to its own teaching and the sworn duty of its own servants, cease from being aggressive. On the subject of National Education Southey's opinions tallied in some points with the sentiments of men at once religious and liberal; amongst whom was the celebrated Dr. Arnold. That there ought not only to be, but that there was a necessity for, an extensive system of education, he strongly advocated; but he could not satisfy himself that any attempt ought to be made unconnected with the teaching of the principles of the Christian religion. For this reason he objected to the establishment of the University College, and even to the introduction of the Mechanics' Institutes. He proceeded upon certain postulates, which he drew up for his own satisfaction. Having firmly fixed in his own mind the truth of revealed religion, he considered the Church of England, though requiring amendment, exclusively the safest repository of the word of truth. He regarded its connexion with the State necessary; and, moreover, that all revolution must destroy the happiness of a generation. In the present advanced state of opinion it is not necessary to discuss again these notions of our political poet. He was strongly attached to them, as most men are to extreme ideas.

Southey, in the summer of this year, went to London, for the twofold purpose of seeing his uncle, the Rev. Herbert Hill, for the last time, and to undergo a painful operation for a disease which had for

twelve years afflicted him, and impaired his health and his enjoyments. He found upon his arrival that there were few hopes of his uncle's recovery. He was seventy-nine years of age, and bowed down by suffering. The meeting was indeed the last, for Southey had scarcely returned home before he expired.

A curious trait of Southey's character is displayed connected with the operation he underwent. He was aware that it would be attended with much pain and considerable danger, and, well knowing how apprehensive his family would be did they suppose he intended to undergo such an operation, he left home without raising the least suspicion of his intention, and the first intimation they received of it was from his own hand, still trembling from its effects. "God be thanked," he says, "I shall no longer bear about with me the sense of a wearying and harassing infirmity; and though you will not give me credit for being a good bearer of pain, because I neither liked to have my finger scorched by a hot plate nor scarified by that abominable instrument called a pin, yet Copeland will."

Among his other London engagements, he sat to Sir Thomas Lawrence for his portrait and to Sir Francis Chantrey for his bust. The former is considered the best likeness of him that has been executed: the latter, though admired by his friends, did not satisfy the judgment of the illustrious sculptor.

CHAPTER XX.

Review of Southey's Labours—His Hopes and Aspirations—
Rev. Mr. Shannon—Colloquies of Sir Thomas More, and the
Rev. J. Hornby—The Church and Methodism—A Cha-
ritable Institution—Literary Labours—Visit to London—
Political Excitement—Visit to Hampshire—Crediton—
Bristol.

ÆTAT. 55-57.

THE incidents connected with the life of Southey, as we have observed before, are so "few and far between," that we must not be surprised to find a considerable period elapse without affording matter of sufficient importance to warrant its assertion. His daily routine was so similar, that having once described it, we have given the reader a correct idea of his mode of living for upwards of forty years of the most energetic and laborious portion of his existence. Whatever diversity occurred was occasioned only by change of the subject upon which he was engaged, the visits of his friends, or an excursion from home. His table was always crowded

with articles to be finished, reviews to be posted, and poems *in embryo*. The "Quarterly," the "Foreign Quarterly," and the Annuals, pressed upon him the necessity of dispatch ; whilst his "Colloquies," or "History of Portugal," were only laid aside temporarily, to be taken up as soon as the immediate pressure of engagements was removed. His writings, much as he had formerly been averse to it, had of late been political and controversial. He had been drawn involuntarily into the vortex of public discussion, and entered the arena with strong feelings and a fearless independence, which could not be affected by the influence of friends nor overawed by the denunciations of enemies. In fact, he had accustomed himself to disregard the virulent language of his political opponents so far as not to allow it to influence the proper equipoise of his spirits ; though he could not occasionally help reflecting that the continued and universal attacks made upon his writings seriously injured him in a pecuniary point of view, by depreciating the value of his books and diminishing the extent of their sale. Yet such causes were impotent to change the strong conviction of his heart. He wrote what he firmly believed to be for the welfare of his country ; and if he erred, as certainly he did, in the view which he took of many of the principles of government, the error was in his judgment, for in his heart he was irreproachably sincere. He looked to the future for the justification of his

life and opinions, and was consoled with the hope that posterity would award to him that measure of justice which his own age apparently was so unwilling to confer.

Yet there were occasions when his feelings proved too sensitive, and his unconscious spirit was open to a wound. He had never shrunk from avowedly confessing the change which had taken place in his political sentiments, and he had borne with a smile the abuse which not a few were ever pouring upon him — conscious of the rectitude of his life, and bold in the confidence that he could give a reason for the faith that was in him. But some there were who, not content to vilify him upon the realities of his life, went even so far as to misrepresent what had passed privately in conversation between him and them, and invent expressions which he had never used. Amongst this number was the Rev. Mr. Shannon, of Edinburgh, who, roused by some powerful passages in an article on the Catholic question which appeared in the "Quarterly," insidiously hoped "that it was not the production of Mr. Southey, as it was utterly inhuman;" that he could remember when the enthusiasm of Southey rose to the highest pitch of indignation on alluding to the wrongs and sufferings of Ireland; "and that it was impossible that the moral sense should undergo so complete a transformation, except from causes which were liable to suspicion." An article in the "Times" gave greater

publicity to these sentiments, which had been embodied in a pamphlet; and many, following in the same track, were willing to receive for fact the gratuitous statement of this reverend gentleman, and to scandalise Southey with the imputation of corrupt tergiversation.

This charge, however, was ably answered and refuted by Henry Taylor, in a spirited letter to the "Times," in which, after examining the article in question, he produced passages that, so far from exhibiting an "inhuman spirit," evinced a strong and liberal mind, and an earnest desire to rescue that unhappy people from the ignorance, misery, and degradation into which they had sunk. Southey could appeal to friends who had been his intimate associates for years, to show that what were his opinions upon Ireland and the Catholic question thirty years previously were the same then; and he himself, in a letter to the Rev. Mr. Shannon, observes, "Nor do I suppose that we differ now upon anything else relating to Ireland, except upon the question whether concession to the Romanists is likely to remedy the evils of that poor country, or to aggravate them." Southey, however, considered that Mr. Shannon, in his allusion to the causes which are liable to suspicion, had done him a public wrong and owed him a public acknowledgment; but the latter gentleman persisted in maintaining the correctness of his own impression.

But if the serener hours of Southey were thus rudely disturbed by the voice of condemnation, he had frequently the happiness to find that his efforts were not altogether unproductive of good. In his "Colloquies of Sir Thomas More" he had taken an opportunity of introducing the subject of Church Methodism, and the establishment of females to visit the sick at hospitals, rather than incur the risk of plunging into those—at that time—dens of iniquity, the prisons. This led him into a correspondence with Sir Oswald Mosley, the Rev. J. J. Hornby of Urnwick, and others, upon the feasibility of effecting a union between the Church and Methodism. There were not a few—and it is, in a great measure, the case at this present—who saw with apprehension the wide chasm that existed between the clergy and the humbler portion of their flock. However assiduous a minister might be in the discharge of his sacred duties—however constant in visiting the poor and the afflicted—however affable in his manner towards them, they could not but perceive that the education, position, and tone of feeling in the one contrasted too strongly with the habits and disposition of the other; and that the cement which united the poorer portion of the congregation was rather a respectful gratitude than the bond of Christian fellowship. Hence it was thought advisable to adopt the services of men who should visit the sick, expound the Scriptures, and relieve the ordained clergyman of much of his arduous

duties. Thus, whilst acting under the direction of the Church, they would gain over and retain thousands who, from the cause above stated, swelled the ranks of Dissent.

Southey wished to introduce this organisation still farther. "In any parish," he writes to the Rev. J. J. Hornby, "where a society were once methodised, it might be possible to engraft upon their discipline a plan of looking after the sick for the purpose of administering to their bodily necessities." In his "Colloquies" before mentioned, he had alluded to two female characters, in language so descriptive of their persons and labours that they could not be mistaken,—Mrs. Fry and Mrs. Opie. These he had pointed out as well fitted to take the lead in the formation of such a society. This led to a communication with the latter lady, having for its object a better understanding of his plan, and an expression of readiness on her part and that of Mrs. Fry to co-operate as far as was in their power in promoting so charitable an object.

The result of these communications was, that Mr. Hornby, in concert with a Mr. Hodgson of Liverpool, undertook to establish such an institution as an experiment, and to maintain it for two years. For this purpose a house was fitted up, a matron engaged, and nurses trained and sent out. The scheme seemed to answer so well that others joined them, not only in the support of the institution, but in its management

and responsibilities. The effect of this was, that a unity of purpose no longer existed. Some, seeing the valuable class of persons they were training, sought to divert them from the proposed object, and to render them available for the upper classes. This was a direct violation of the very spirit and intention of the plan; the poor, for whom the establishment was set on foot, being set aside, and the charity of its founders defeated. Seeing this perversion of their original object and labours, Mr. Hornby and Mr. Hodgson withdrew at the termination of the two years, and the whole scheme fell to the ground.

For a while the co-operative system attracted the attention of Southey, and he seemed disposed to favour it; but his hands were full of other engagements. "The Peninsular War," a "Life of John Bunyan," an introduction for John Jones' verses, an article for the "Quarterly," on Maw's Journal, and an account of the mission to Tahiti, were the principal matters that occupied him now. He had also accepted a proposition to write a volume of naval history for the "Cabinet Cyclopædia." Thus his life was allowed to pass; little employments, as he expresses it, elbowing worthier and greater undertakings, and shouldering them aside.

Towards the close of this year (1830) Southey resolved upon another journey to London, which was ultimately extended to Hampshire. The great political

drama that was enacting at the time grew every day in interest and attraction ; the struggle between the Reformers and the Anti-reformers became hourly more intense ; and the desire to be present in and mingle with these stirring events was the principal inducement that drew him from his retirement, and induced him again to encounter the multitudes of the crowded metropolis. Another reason may be ascribed to an anxiety to consult personally with his publishers, which he found it expedient to do, as well as to carry out the plan of a new series of Colloquies, in which his friend Mr. Rickman was to be interlocutor, — a plan he had for some time contemplated. A large portion of this work, it appears, was written in the course of the following year, and even a part set up in type ; but, owing to the want of unity in thought and reasoning between the two controversialists, for so we must call them, it was never completed.

When in London he entered, more than he had ever done before, into society. He was in request amongst the highest circles ; he received invitations to dinner from the Duchess of Kent and the Duke of Wellington ; he was a visitor at Lambeth Palace, and mingled with politicians of all opinions and all grades. Statesmen entering office, and ministers resigning their posts, were equally known to him ; and he felt himself sufficiently familiar with some to congratulate them on the success of their intrigues. He must now have

learnt how greatly his services were valued by the higher orders, if he had been before ignorant of it, in the support of the Crown and the Conservative party. He was everywhere recognised with the most lavish compliments and attentions. This was highly gratifying to him; but what struck him as most remarkable on the occasion was, that as he retired from the levee Lord Brougham, then Lord Chancellor, came up and cordially greeted him.

When Southey left London, he proceeded with his friend, Mr. Rickman, into Sussex, and from thence, after a few days, to Buckland, near Lymington, the residence of Miss Bowles, where he found sufficient leisure and repose to finish an article for the ensuing "Quarterly." The remarks he makes upon his progress, and the interesting anecdotes he collected on his journey, show how close an observer he was, even on ground that had been frequented by thousands before him, and to whom it had yielded no particular interest. Everywhere he was met by friends who welcomed him with the warmth of a long-established friendship, or strangers who took the opportunity of testifying their admiration for his learning and abilities by offering him the hospitality of their houses. From Buckland he proceeded into Devonshire, to visit his old friend and fellow-collegian, the Rev. Mr. Lightfoot, at Crediton. Here he spent but a few days, being anxious to see his aunt—the last of his father's generation—who resided at

Taunton, on his way to Bristol, where he had not been for twenty years. Having once more gazed upon the scenes of his childhood, the love of which still kindled in his bosom the fire of fancy and of poetry, he returned home, impatient to resume the quiet tenor of his life.

CHAPTER XXI.

Lord Brougham and the Endowment of Literature—Southey's Opinions on the Subject—Character of Education—Observance of the Sabbath—Reform Bill and the Conservatives—Dr. Bell—Professorship of Humanity, Glasgow—Essays, Moral and Political—The Doctor—Its Publication—Marriage of his eldest Daughter—Illness of his Wife—State of Southey's Feelings.

ÆTAT. 57-61.

DURING this tour Southey was not a little surprised to receive a letter from Lord Brougham. After commenting upon the neglected state of literature in this country, and acknowledging the justice of the censure that lay against the Government for not having done more for its encouragement, his lordship proposed the two following questions, which contain the tenor of his letter for Southey's consideration.

First. Whether or not letters will gain by the more avowed and active encouragement of the Government?

Secondly. In what way that encouragement can be most safely and beneficially given?

The danger to be guarded against under the first head would naturally be the undue influence of Government, which, without very stringent regulations, could easily wield such a fund for its own political purposes, and against the liberties of the country. Under the second head was to be suggested the means — whether, for instance, pecuniary assistance, the encouragement of societies, the judicious foundations of prizes, a more extended distribution of honours, or an order of merit, would be most calculated to produce the desired result.

Southey, in his reply, began by taking a view of the pecuniary prospects of literature and literary men. He suggested that there were works of national importance which might be undertaken by the Government, but which private enterprise could never accomplish. He instanced, for example, the formation of an Entymological Dictionary, which naturally lay without the scope of individual speculation. He hints that literature might gain much by assistance devoted to such a cause, but the nation still more. The arguments which follow this are tinged with his own peculiar feelings, and founded upon an ill-judged opinion of his fellow-labourers in the field of literature. His political opinions or prejudices are unfortunately too strong to suffer him to weigh the matter in an equal balance, and he proceeds upon the exploded notion, that virtue rarely dwells with the needy. He presumes that liberal principles spring from poverty, and exist only amongst the poor ; that a man

might be kept virtuous, that is, free from mischief, by a timely encouragement; and that many clung solely to the popular cause because they were necessitous.

In this reasoning Southey has confounded poverty and crime, and it is obvious that such an object in the encouragement of learning and learned men, "to withhold them from mischief," would be to corrupt, if not to destroy, truth—the great end and object of all inquiry.

The letter further suggests, by way "not of retaining such persons to act as pamphleteers and journalists, but of preventing them from becoming such in hostility to the established order of things," a kind of academy, with salaries (in the nature of literary or lay benefices). A yearly grant of 10,000*l.* might endow ten appointments of 500*l.* each for the elder class, and twenty-five of 200*l.* each for the younger men.* Southey, however, disclaims all idea of honours for literary men. In the case of scientific men he finds a plea in precedent. Newton and Davy were knighted. He cannot, however, conceive it possible that a man of letters can find any accession of pleasure in the distinction of an honorary title and the acquisition of a bloody hand on his escutcheon. All that he demands is an alteration in the law of copyright as it then existed. Having given this opinion, by no means favourable to literary encouragement, unless upon the principle that it is necessary

* See an amusing developement of a similar idea in a novel recently published, entitled "The Fortunes of Francis Croft."

to "purchase up" the silence and submission of opposition, the subject was pursued no further, and it was left to the late Sir Robert Peel to take the initiative in befriending the literature of his country.

Southey's views upon the necessity and importance of education were frequently urged in his different writings and publications. He always advocated an extensive system, and never more fully than in a letter to his friend, the Rev. Neville White. In this letter he justly complains of an education that ends almost where it begins, teaching the children nothing, and sending them out into the world with misconceptions of their actual condition. In such instances he declares it to be an injury rather than a good, an evil springing out of the misapplication of the principle rather than the principle itself. He demands, that if there be an education it should be universal; and that it is just, it is the only safeguard to civil security, that there should be an equality of instruction. The difficult question that presented itself to his mind, however, was, how to make the religious instruction which children received at school of more effect, and how to deal with children of a very tender age. In the first case, he perceives the evil of children being taken from school before their manners are formed. In the second, he is afraid to act, lest we interfere too much with the duties and the privileges of the parents. Yet he laments the consequences of the alternative of non-interference, being convinced that

half the crimes which take place in our villages and our towns is the result of *street* education.

The opposition of Southey to the Reform Bill is so well known that it would be supererogatory to give his opinions here, but the consequences which the passing of that bill were expected by the Conservatives to produce were so extravagant that I cannot forbear extracting from a letter of Southey's, written at this time, a description of the alarm into which that party was thrown :—" I saw Lord —— this morning ; he said, ' We are going to wreck,' and I was shocked to see how ill he looked : twenty years older than when I dined with him at Croker's in December last." This was the result, as Southey would fain believe, of the anxiety produced by the approaching change. The laureate pictures his friends even in a more pitiable state of nervousness than himself at the prospect they had to contemplate — evils coming in with the force of a spring-tide before a high wind. Such was the inflated language used to prepare the mind to expect the most terrible calamities. We can now afford to contemplate, without anger, the absurd previsions of men conservatively organised. That there are such men is evident ; and, despite his early enthusiasm, Southey was one of them. We have a right, however, to be less lenient to those who, after seeing the beneficial results of reform, persist in regretting the old system. The extension of the franchise was then an experiment ; empyricism is always dangerous, but

who, looking back over the last twenty years, can affirm that the operation of the Reform Act has not been attended with beneficial results ? The trial has been made, the good experienced, and England is now awaiting a further extension of that which has proved so invaluable a blessing.

The name of Dr. Bell has been occasionally alluded to in these pages. For his person Southey had the greatest respect, and his system of education met with his warmest support. A long life had been devoted by the Doctor to the developement of his plan, and it met, for awhile, with great popularity. Southey was now invited to attend his friend upon the melancholy business of setting in order his worldly affairs. A gradual paralysis had deprived him of the power of speech, and his constitution was otherwise affected ; so that, although he retained his mental faculties in full vigour, he might at any hour, or at any moment, be summoned to his last account.

The Rev. Doctor had, it appears, deposited 120,000*l.* in the three per cents, in the hands of trustees, and this sum had been divided into twelve parts, six of which went to the town and University of St. Andrew's, and four for founding Madras Schools at Edinburgh, Glasgow, Aberdeen, and Inverness. On the disposal of the remaining two, he requested the advice of Southey, who proposed that one part should be given to the augmentation of small livings, upon the ground that, as the pro-

perty had been almost wholly derived from the Church, the Church had some claim upon a part of it ; and that the other should be applied for founding schools upon his own plan in parishes so assisted. Dr. Bell, however, did not coincide with this opinion, and considered it his duty rather to devote his whole property to the object which had occupied his life. The will was so framed.

A rapid tour of three hundred miles; by way of Liverpool to Shrewsbury, and by Manchester home, released Southey, during the autumn of this year, from his heavy duties, and recruited his strength. Upon his return he found an invitation to offer himself a candidate for the Professorship of Humanity at Glasgow awaiting him, with the confident assurance that the chances of success were not doubtful. He had received the notice, however, too late to enable him to make certain inquiries ; and apprehending that the professors were required to subscribe to the Kirk's articles of faith, which left him no choice, he allowed the invitation to remain unaccepted ; " though," as he expresses it, " under the present circumstances of the publishing trade, it would have become a question of prudence, in which inclination must not have been suffered to interfere."

The " Essays, Moral and Political," which were selections from Southey's most important articles in the " Quarterly Review," or the " Edinburgh Annual Register," were now produced. In printing them, Southey's desire was to restore those passages which Gifford had

so unsparingly cut out, or perverted, or weakened, and to give to the public a complete and genuine edition of his opinions upon those topics. He was not, however, always successful in restoring the mutilated parts, since it was not in his power, in every instance, to recover the MSS. to enable him to effect his purpose. It was also his intention that, if these obtained a tolerable sale, to follow them with similar volumes, ecclesiastical, historical, literary, and miscellaneous.

Not long after the professor's chair at Glasgow had been proposed to Southey, a similar offer on the part of the Durham University was made to him. The state of the publishing trade, I have said, would have induced him to accept a post where his remaining years might be spent free from those harassing pecuniary anxieties which appeared to be increasing as he grew older; but, after communicating with the authorities of the college, it was found that the remuneration was not such as would warrant his removal from Keswick, and he returned patiently to the undeviating sources of his income, and concluded his "History of the Peninsular War."

It has been frequently remarked in the course of these pages, that Southey's pen was never at rest. The demands of the publishers, or the energy of his own character and the love of writing, kept him incessantly occupied; and although he was above sixty years of age, more than forty of which had been devoted to literature, the vigour of his mind and hand did not seem to flag.

In addition to his ordinary periodical labours, a "Life of John Bunyan," to accompany an edition of the "Pilgrim's Progress," "Select Works of British Poets," from Chaucer to Jonson, edited with biographical notices, and the last volume of the "Peninsular War," had issued from his pen between the years 1830 and 1833, whilst the "Lives of the English Divines," and the "Naval History of England" were in preparation.

In 1834 was published "The Doctor," the incidents connected with the composition and publication of which are of an amusing character. It had been commenced as early as the year 1813, and occasionally resorted to in spare moments as an amusement. Into it were inwoven all that odd knowledge and quaint collection of fancies which its author met with in the course of his extensive and extraordinary readings from old books and antiquated writers, as well as much playful and serious matter that could not be disposed of elsewhere. One of the curious facts connected with it was, that its existence was only known to Grosvenor Bedford, and, latterly, Mr. Henry Taylor. The work having accumulated by the advance of many years, Southey determined to publish two volumes to test the public taste. To create some little excitement about the book, it was also resolved to keep the matter a secret from the printers, to whom Southey's handwriting was well-known; and by the assistance of his two friends it was transcribed, and put into the hands of the publisher. So privately was

the whole affair conducted, that, whatever members of the family were cognizant of the printing of "The Doctor," his son was designedly kept ignorant of it.

It had been previously arranged that, when published, the volumes should be sent to Greta Hall, with "From the author" written on the title-page. Upon its arrival much surprise was occasioned, much curiosity excited. Not a few of Southey's friends, knowing his habits and train of thought, referred the work to him. But there were many extraneous circumstances that threw them off the scent, and, not least, the ignorance which Southey affected as to the authorship.

The mystification that existed on the subject,—the conversations that were held upon it, and especially about the book, afforded much amusement to the initiated; and as Mr. Cuthbert Southey was ignorant who the author was, this seemed to throw those friends who were staying at Greta Hall still more off their guard. At length the doubt was cleared up by Southey himself presenting to his son the MS. of "The Doctor."

The next event of any importance in Southey's life was the marriage of his eldest daughter to the Rev. J. W. Warter, and her departure for the coast of Sussex. This was to him a real affliction. He was particularly domesticated, and attached to every individual who had upon him either the claims of affection, or to whom he had become sincerely attached by a long exercise of hospitality. His own family were not is

only members. His wife's sisters, Mrs. Lovell and Mrs. Coleridge, with their families, had long formed a part of his household, together with Miss Barker, a young lady whose acquaintance he first made at Cintra. Around his hearth these were all hospitably received, and although his income was never large and always precarious, yet he cheerfully laboured for their support. In 1829 his niece, Miss Coleridge, had been married to her cousin, Henry Nelson Coleridge, and the change thus effected in his circle (for Mrs. Coleridge went to reside with her daughter), the loss of old familiar faces, left a sense of loneliness upon his spirit; and when his daughter was withdrawn he felt that his home—home in the true, unalloyed sense of the word—was broken up for ever.

Yet a deeper sorrow was looming upon him. For some time Mrs. Southey had been in a weak and nervous state. Her spirits had during a long life been harassed by an increasing anxiety, arising from the precarious nature of their income and the heaviness of their expenditure, as well as from the excitement of too much company, and all this had acted injuriously upon her constitution; and now a total loss of appetite and sleep created serious apprehensions, which were too sadly realised in the certain discovery that she was no longer herself.

Her immediate removal seemed the best remedy to this mental disease; and, with a sorrowing heart,

Southey conveyed her to an asylum near York. In allusion to this journey he writes,—“I have been parted from my wife by something worse than death : forty years she has been the life of my life.” In another letter he writes,—“I cannot but regard it as a special mercy that this affliction should have fallen upon me at a time when there were no extraneous circumstances to aggravate it.” This was a painful and a trying season for Southey. The varying accounts he received from York—alternating to good one day, to evil the next—kept him in a constant state of inquietude ; yet though he could be no longer happy, for the sake of others he was contented and cheerful. “A common observer,” observes his son, “would have remarked but little change in him, except that he was unusually silent ; *but to his family the change was great indeed.*” The regular report from York at length closed up all the springs of hope ; and the only reasonable expectation that now could be entertained was that such an improvement would take place as might restore the unconscious mother to the care of her family, under that roof which her presence had cheered and blessed for so many years.

CHAPTER XXII.

Offer of a Baronetcy—Pension from the Civil List—Health of Mrs. Southey—Southey subpoenaed to the Lancaster Assizes—Tour to the West of England—Life of Cowper—Naval Biography—Death of Mrs. Southey—Tour on the Continent—Calais—Caen—Bayeux—Nantes—Orleans—Paris—Return to England—Second Marriage of Southey.

WHATEVER may be the judgment formed of Southey's political opinions, in whatever estimate his poetic efforts may be held by the critics of the present or future ages, there can be no doubt but that there are few branches of literature which have not been enriched by his extensive study and erudition, and the force and elegance of his writings. That these services to his country were not altogether unappreciated, cannot be better shown than by the mark of respect which it was intended by the Government of the day to bestow upon him.

This was a proposal on the part of Sir Robert Peel to confer upon him a baronetcy. The offer was conveyed to him in a complimentary letter from the minister, who took occasion to insert another—a pri-

vate one. This was to request him, unreservedly, to state in what manner Sir Robert could best serve him, as he felt it his duty as a public man to mark the services which Southey had rendered, "not only to literature, but to the higher interests of virtue and religion."

Southey, on the receipt of these letters, at once perceived how unwise it would be in him to accept an honour that could not add to his permanent fame, and which, under the present afflicted state of his family, would seem like a mockery. There were, also, prudential motives. His income was inadequate to support, with becoming dignity, "the pomp and circumstance" attached to such a title; and he felt that it might disturb the present purposes of his son, and materially affect the better interests of his future. Therefore, with an unreserved statement of his affairs (frankness was one of his characteristics), he replied to Sir Robert Peel's communications, and declined the proffered baronetcy. The result of Southey's letter, however, was, that it induced Sir Robert to apply "the miserable pittance" at the disposal of the Crown in the Civil List Pension Fund to the encouragement of literature. The Right Hon. Baronet did so to establish a principle, which he hoped, at some future time, would be more liberally extended by Parliament with the same laudable view. Accordingly Southey had a sum of 800*l.* added to the amount of his existing pensions.

Nor was he the only recipient of the prime minister's bounty. Professor Airy of Cambridge, Mrs. Somerville, Sharon Turner, and James Montgomery, were placed upon the same list.

This public generosity on the part of Sir Robert Peel happily removed that uncertainty about his future means which had so frequently been the source of harassing embarrassment to the mind of Southey. Yet he did not remit the assiduity with which he had always pursued his literary labours. Numerous engagements still pressed upon him, and his active mind was still occupied in, and relieved by, the production of new works, of which his "Life of Cowper" was the chief. In the affliction which had so severely shaken him he had now the consolation—if consolation it can be called—of having her who had been the partner of his hopes and anxieties for forty years once more under his care and protection. She was still labouring under her dreadful malady, and seemed totally unconscious of once familiar faces; but as she had remained perfectly harmless, and there appeared no probability of her further recovery, Southey deemed it cruel to keep her one moment longer than was necessary away from the gratification which she still might derive from having her family around her. Yet was her presence, in some measure, a source of increased solicitude to her husband. He was anxious of alleviating, as far as was in his power, her distress, and

imposed the office of watching her wants, and suggesting whatever he thought might still amuse her, upon himself. He felt, too, that it was his duty to exhibit as much cheerfulness as he could command, to amuse the rest of his household. In fact, so closely did he apply himself to these objects, that it was apprehended his health would suffer, as he denied himself those little exercises, and those kind excursions, which were so necessary after that incessant application to study and composition every month and week of the year witnessed.

How long this disinclination to leave home might have lasted can be only conjectural, had not a circumstance occurred which rendered his presence elsewhere imperative. About this time a subpoena was served upon him to attend at the Lancaster assizes, on what was commonly called "the great will case." Mr. Marsden, the late proprietor of the Hornby Castle estate—an estate yielding an annual income of between 6000*l.* and 7000*l.*—having bequeathed it to the son of his steward, Admiral Tatham, the heir-at-law, challenged the competency of Mr. Marsden to make a will. One part of the evidence rested upon a series of letters, purporting to be the production of the testator, which it was contended contained internal testimony of the fact. It was therefore determined to take the advice of several literary men upon the subject; and Dr. Lingard, Wordsworth, Dr. Shelton, Mackenzie, and

Southey were selected to give evidence. This temporary separation from home was so far beneficial, that it induced Southey to comply with the urgent entreaties of his friends not to trust too much upon the present favourable state of his health, but to employ those means which he had periodically used for relieving his overwrought mind and refreshing and invigorating his constitution.

The sole cause of his reluctance to leave home had been the apprehension of the effect his absence might produce upon his wife's health and spirits. He still fancied that she received satisfaction, if not actual enjoyment, from his presence, and he was unwilling to withdraw that little consolation from one so bereaved, or leave her entirely to the care of others. His forced visit to Lancaster was a favourable experiment. Beyond a momentary discomfort, it was observed that no material difference was produced; and, relying upon this, he felt that he might with confidence entrust her to the attentions and kindness of her family.

Accordingly, though the year was late, he determined to proceed along the West of England, through Bristol, to the Land's End, and back through London to Keswick. His health was the principal inducement to this tour, but he was also desirous of paying a long promised visit to the Rev. Neville White, of inspecting some MS. letters of Cowper which had not been submitted to his perusal, and also of seeing, for perhaps

the last time, and showing to his son, the scenes and haunts of his childhood. With these objects in view he left home on the 24th of November, crossed the Mersey to Chester, and on the following day arrived at Gredington, the seat of Lord Kenyon. Having passed two or three days here admiring and enjoying the scenery, which embraced a distant view of the Welsh mountains, he proceeded to Birmingham, having made, *en passant*, a few flying visits. From Birmingham Southey posted to Pipe Hayes, the residence of Mr. Egerton Bagot, in whose possession the MS. letters of Cowper remained. Here he devoted two mornings to the perusal of these letters, and transcribing such as had hitherto been withheld, and arrived at Bristol on the 3d of November, where he was hospitably welcomed and entertained by his old friend and publisher, Mr. Cottle. To one of Southey's temperament such a meeting could not but be accompanied with regretful associations. Though no one ever looked forward with more humble confidence to the final consummation of all things than he, yet he loved to dwell—nature and education had directed his feelings—amongst the past, and feed a pensive joy upon the riches of retrospection. The review of his life now forced itself vividly upon his mind. He beheld, as it were in a grand panorama, the scenes of his childhood, manhood, and later career sweep before him. The remembrance of his past delight, springing from the exuberance of a young and ardent

imagination and quick feelings,—the struggles and disappointments, now sunk into insignificance in the long perspective of time, which had often checked his brightest anticipations but never oppressed him,—the faithfulness he had experienced in his friendships, the bitter animosity he had found in the world, the honours that had crowned his intense labours, and the afflictions which had recently overtaken him, reappeared before him like a picture mellowed and softened by the pencil of evening; and as he contemplated it a chastened pleasure stole softly into his soul, and soothed, as with a strain of music, the melancholy wanderings of his spirit.

He was at Bristol, the place of his nativity, and no spot connected with his younger days was unvisited. The house,—the very room in which he was born,—the schools he had been sent to,—the old mansion where he occasionally lived with his grandmother, and spent some of the pleasantest hours of his boyhood, engaged in youthful sports with Shadrach Weeks, stringing jessamine blossoms with his sisters under the antique honeysuckled porch, or learned to love the garden and rural scenes,—the church in which he had been accustomed to attend divine service,—the residence of Miss Tyler in College Green,—even his boarding-school at Corston,—all were sacred in his memory; nor was Westbury forgotten, where in Martin Hall he passed, as he acknowledges, the happiest year of his life. In these visits he

enjoyed the society of Walter S. Landor, who contributed greatly to the pleasure of these pilgrimages.

From Bristol Southey hastened on to Bremhill, the picturesque residence of the Rev. William Bowles, and, having paid a grateful tribute to friendship and poetical genius, proceeded to Holincote, the seat of Sir Thomas Acland. In the company and under the guidance of this gentleman he went to Killerton, where he met Scoresby the Ceticide and the Earl of Devon. He visited also Mrs. Crauford, the widow of the general killed at Ciudad Rodrigo; and Charles Hoare, the banker. At Powderham, the seat of Lord Devon, he remained one night, and went the next day to his old friend, the Rev. Mr. Lightfoot, at Crediton, where he spent "three comfortable days in a parsonage, having everything about him that the heart of man could desire."

After inspecting Hartland Abbey, Southey continued his journey into Cornwall, and was gratified by visiting places highly interesting to him, as he had described many of them in his ballads. The magnificent ruins of Tintagel, reared upon stupendous rocks whose airy crests beetled over the far deep, presented a rugged and wild scene peculiarly grateful to his imagination; nor was the more distant, though not less magnificent, grandeur of St. Michael's Mount, a less striking object; whilst the chair from which Rebecca Penlake was thrown, and the well of St. Keyne, near Liskeard, were not without

their attractions. Having visited the Rev. Derwent Coleridge at Helston, and the Rev. E. Bray, the husband of the novelist, he arrived at Tarring, in Sussex, the residence of his eldest daughter since her marriage. From thence he went to London, where he remained with his old friends of the metropolis for three weeks, when a long arrear of engagements drew him back to Keswick, once his cheerful and happy home.

He now enjoyed for a few short months that pleasure which a broken and afflicted family and an intenser application to business could afford. Yet they were not altogether passed without anxiety. He had devoted much time and labour, not to say expense, to preparing a careful edition of Cowper's life for Messrs. Baldwin and Cradock; and as his task was completed, and he was looking forward to the settlement of their accounts, which would have amounted to a considerable sum, their insolvency was declared. This created a temporary disquietude; but he never was deeply affected by such disappointments, and when the affairs of his publishers were arranged he found himself a no greater loser than for the sum of two hundred and fifty pounds.

His greatest bereavement now fell upon him. His wife, who had been labouring under her mental calamity for upwards of three years, with no hope to her friends of recovery, yet apparently happy in the society and affection of her family, had been for some time wasting away, and on the 16th of Nov. 1837 expired, free, as far

as could be judged, from pain, until excess of weakness became suffering. "During more than two-thirds of my life," writes Southey upon her death, "she had been the chief object of my thoughts and I of hers. No man had a truer helpmate; no children a more careful mother."

Though the event might have been anticipated, and humanly speaking even desirable, Southey felt deeply the stroke; and those around him perceived how great a change it had wrought upon him. During the whole period of her affliction, whilst there was room for the exercise of mental hope or physical exertion, he had borne up patiently, if not cheerfully, and applied all his energies; nor did he fail to seek the aid of a higher Power to control his own feelings, for the sake of her over whom he watched and those who required his most constant as well as kindest solicitude. Now that the cause of that exertion was removed, and his mind became relaxed, it was found how weak the long-continued struggle and tension of thought had left it. His spirits became prostrate; and although he persevered in the usual routine of his daily duties, and the care of those now left under his sole protection, he appeared incapable of accommodating himself to his bereaved circumstances, and was in every respect an altered man. The next six months followed in their accustomed course, and found him busy in his correspondence, preparing a new and corrected edition of his poems, continuing his "Naval History," and writing

reviews for the "Quarterly;" but in his letters might be discovered that subdued tone which told how deeply the axe of grief had struck into the root of his affections, whilst a sincere resignation and a patient abiding of the great day pervaded his whole conduct.

His health was also sensibly impaired, and an infirmity which had recently become troublesome prevented him from taking that regular exercise which was essential to its preservation. It was, therefore, deemed advisable by his friends that the autumn of this year should be devoted to an excursion upon the Continent. A party of six was consequently made up, which consisted of Mr. Senhouse—he had accompanied him in his tour through Switzerland in 1817—Mr. Kenyon, Mr. Henry Crabbe Robinson, Captain Jones, R.N., Southey, and his son. The route fixed upon lay through Normandy, Brittany, and a part of Louvaine, to terminate at Paris.

Crossing over to Calais, they proceeded along the western coast and visited Havre, Harfleur, Caen, Bayeux, Granville, St. Malo, Nantes, Angiers, Saumur, Tours, and Orleans,—names suggestive in themselves of peculiar attractions. Having visited the most interesting places in the neighbourhood of these towns, they continued their journey to Paris. Mount St. Michael's and Carnac were the spots, in the early part of their tour, which afforded the greatest pleasure to Southey; the former as being the counterpart of the Cornish

Mount, and the latter as containing the most numerous remains of a Druidical temple of any now existing. As he prosecuted his excursion, a different gratification was afforded him in the statue of Joan of Arc at Rouen, and the Castle of Chinon, amongst the ruins of which is still shown the apartment where the Maid of Orleans had her first interview with the king. At Paris the party separated; Captain Jones and Mr. Kenyon proceeding to the Low Countries, Mr. Robinson remaining awhile in that city, and Southey and his son, with Mr. Senhouse, dropping down the Seine in a steamer, to proceed homeward by way of Havre-de-Gracc. At Southampton the small party was again broken up; Mr. Senhouse proceeding to Cumberland, Mr. Cuthbert Southey to Oxford, and Southey to Lymington, where he intended paying a visit to Miss Bowles.

During this excursion, although all passed off pleasantly enough, there were occasions when the effects of time, or some other decaying influence, was strongly perceived upon Southey. His step was slower; frequent fits of abstraction, and unwonted indecision, marked his conduct. This might be the result of age, accompanied with a fondness for deep meditation; but there were other symptoms, which seemed to point out the real cause. He not unfrequently lost his way in the hotels at which they stopped. The journal, in which he still minutely recorded what he had visited, is broken off abruptly when about two-thirds of the tour is completed;

and a sudden visible change in the handwriting seemed to indicate the progress of the malady fast creeping upon him. He was not insensible himself that his memory was failing; and when detected in an error of date or reference, a smile filled his features with a painful, melancholy light.

It was probably the consciousness of this mental weakness, the apprehension of the mind's disease, so frequently alluded to almost prophetically in some of his letters, that induced him to take the step which followed his return to England. His home-family was now reduced to one daughter,—Miss Bertha having been married to her cousin, the Rev. Herbert Hill. His eldest daughter was far away from him in Sussex; and his son, dividing his time between Oxford and Keswick, left but a small portion of it for the latter. Under these circumstances he resolved upon a second marriage; and Miss Caroline Bowles, well known as one of the most pleasing and natural poetesses of the day, was the affianced bride. Southey knew the apparent inconsistency of the step he was about to take. He felt that it was either "the wisest or weakest action" he could commit; but he trusted that he was sufficiently acquainted with the opinions, principles, and likings of the bride, to anticipate a happy result. This event was accordingly solemnised at Boldre church on the 5th of June, 1839; and after a short sojourn in Hampshire, Mr. and Mrs. Southey returned to Keswick.

CHAPTER XXIII.

The last Scene — Review of Southey's Character and Writings
— Greta Hall.

FROM this time Southey was no more to the world, and the world no more to him. In his family he was as one that was not. The life still remained : his person was amongst them ; but the distinguishing principle of the man, the intellect, had forsaken its seat, and left him as a stranger in a strange land. Those who had been the comfort and consolation of many years of his latter life, — whose smile had sweetened every toil, and whose happiness had been his constant study, — those he could recognise no more : his mind was a blank. As his recollection became less perfect, events of recent interest first faded. On circumstances that occupied the busiest periods of his life his thoughts then dwelt ; and when the veil was drawn over these, objects of a far-off time more closely allied to his feelings lin-

gered in the cells of memory. So sensible was he of the decay of this faculty, that when he failed to recall a name or a place, he would press his hand to his brow, and with a painful emotion exclaim,—“Memory, memory, where art thou gone?”

The malady which had thus deprived him of the noblest gift of God, though gradual in its process, was not slow. On his return from Hampshire he passed through London, and it was anxiously and sorrowfully observed by his friends that the fire and vigour of his former conversations were wanting—that his remarks were broken and abrupt—that his discourse was incoherent. This weakness they were at first willing to attribute to an attack of influenza, which had greatly debilitated his physical powers—so fondly do we refuse anticipations of evil.

But those who remembered that, for forty years of his life, his mental application had been intense and unceasing,—that his anxiety to provide the means of subsistence had been continuous,—that his system was highly nervous, and that the afflictions which he had endured so patiently had shaken him to the root, began to apprehend that there was a more lasting and permanent cause for his mental debility. Still they hoped that the quiet living of his home, a return to his favourite employments, the air of his mountains, and his naturally easy and cheerful disposition, would do much towards restoring him once more to consciousness.

But it was not so ; and his subsequent conduct showed that the mind was entirely worn out.

Whilst the lamp of reason still burnt, although the flame was dim and hectic, he would talk of work to be continued, and anticipate a period of renewing it. His "History of Portugal," "The Monastic Orders," "The Doctor,"—subjects that had occupied his thoughts for many years—were spoken of: all were to be taken in hand, all completed, and new labours added to the list before he died. When the power of comprehending their meaning was gone, he still spent his time mechanically in reading his beloved volumes, and would walk slowly round his library, and gaze with evident pleasure upon the books which had so long been the companions of his hours of study and retirement. At length, so entirely was the power of receiving this gratification withdrawn by the total extinction of the memory and perceptive faculties, that he passed the last year of his life as it were in a dream, without any knowledge or consciousness of what was passing around him. In this state he languished on. The body became gradually weaker, and disorders, which his melancholy condition rendered it impossible to treat, appeared. A fever which ensued terminated at once whatever pain or pleasure he was capable of receiving in this life, on the 21st of March, 1843.

The conduct of his funeral was simple. It was a dark and stormy morning when his remains were con-

veyed to their narrow home. In the beautiful churchyard of Crosthwaite, at the western end, in the bosom of the mountains he loved so well, and by the side of his beloved Herbert, of his faithful wife, and his lamented Edith and Isabel, they were deposited without pomp and without ceremony. The surviving members of his family, Wordsworth, and some of his immediate neighbours, followed him to the grave, and thus paid their last mournful tribute of affection, friendship, and respect to the name and the genius of Southey.

In the cathedral of his native city, in the illustrious corner of Westminster Abbey, busts and tablets were erected to signify the public sense of his merits and services. In the church of Crosthwaite, which was restored to its ancient architectural proportions for the occasion, a full-length recumbent statue, executed in marble—an excellent likeness as well as a beautiful work of art—was placed by public subscription, and on its base were inscribed the following verses from the pen of the poet Wordsworth:—

“Ye vales and hills, whose beauty hither drew
The poet's steps, and fixed him here; on you
His eyes have closed; and ye, loved books, no more
Shall Southey feed upon your precious lore:
To works that ne'er shall forfeit their renown,
Adding immortal labours of his own,
Whether he traced historic truths with zeal,
For the state's guidance or the public weal;

Or fancy, disciplined by curious art,
Informed his pen ; or wisdom of the heart ;
Or judgments, sanctioned in the patriot's mind
By reverence for the rights of all mankind :
Wide were his aims, yet in no human breast
Could private feelings meet in holier rest.
His joys, his griefs, have vanished like a cloud
From Skiddaw's top, but he to heaven was vowed
Through a long life, and pure and steadfast faith
Calmed in his soul the fear of change and death."

A broad forehead, dark complexion, eyebrows large and arched, a piercing eye, mouth somewhat prominent, muscular, and expressive, a small chin and aquiline nose, constitute the principal features of Southey's face. In appearance he was tall, being but one inch under six feet, in his manner dignified, but possessing great suavity. His countenance, when he spoke, was full of animation, kindness, and intelligence ; and in the movement of his dark-brown eye was revealed a deep and penetrating spirit. His frame was spare, capable of great activity, yet giving no indication of a weak constitution. A rich profusion of black hair mantled his forehead, which as he advanced in years and sorrows gathered in upon him, became snowy white, then grew perceptibly darker in his last affliction, which left him free from the cares and solitudes of life.

Of his character, I trust, a sufficiently correct and distinct picture has been drawn in the foregoing pages to enable the reader to determine for himself. To decide between the errors of the heart and the errors of the

judgment requires an impartial no less than a discriminating mind, and those who come to estimate the character of Southey, filled with the vague rumours propagated by his political antagonists, will do an equal injustice to the man and to themselves. In his social and domestic relations, Southey was unimpeachable. As a husband, a father, and a friend, he was faithful, affectionate, and sincere. An humble yet confident feeling of devotion regulated his actions, whilst a natural cheerfulness of disposition induced him to regard with unclouded thankfulness every dispensation of Providence. A fearless and independent conduct marked his career, and though inconsistencies occasionally appear in his opinions, they are the result of a boldness of thought and freedom of inquiry that led him to adopt his own conclusions, lest the adoption of views propounded by others should trammel his own convictions. In the consciousness of great talents unprostituted to the service of immorality, and a rectitude of life that could defy the malice of detraction, he exhibits at times an indiscreet prominence of his own merits, and loses by his fervent egotism what would otherwise redound to the discredit of his opponents.

In his political creed, the greatest disparity is to be found between the professions of his early years and the conclusions to which he arrived at the close of his long and studious life. Yet to a close observer the steps of this change, from the wild theorist of Pantisocratic

schemes to the firm supporter of the ancient institutions of his country, will appear gradual and distinct; and it must be left to those who have still retained the crude and imperfect opinions of their youth, after the experience of many years, to define the term, and to determine how much of opprobrium is to be attached to the appellation of renegade.

It was Southey's fondest expectation that the laurel of epic poetry would be awarded to him by future generations, and that his name would hold a higher rank in the estimation of posterity than it did amongst the critics of his own day. But he overrated the quality of his genius. An extensive acquaintance with history and mythology, with romance and fiction, gave him a facility of composition which is truly astonishing, and he vainly imagined that the quantity of verse that he had written would be of itself a sufficient guarantee of immortality. His "Joan of Arc" appeared at a time when the sentiments it inculcated were the doctrines of the nation, and it achieved a greater reputation than he expected or its merits deserve. The higher efforts of his muse, "Thalaba," "The Curse of Kehama," to which may be added "Madoc," have never become popular, and the same fate — with the exception of a few ballads — has awaited his other poetical productions. Yet to the student and critical reader the gorgeous and sublime descriptions which he meets with in these poems will always be read with pleasure. Like an accumulation

of clouds at sunset, or a vast extent of mountains rising forth in the remote horizon, they suggest splendid pictures to the imagination. The fictions of Southey, grand as they are, seldom affect the heart, seldom captivate the human affections. The life, the fire, the reality of truth is wanting, and his images and personages pass before us cold and unsubstantial. To this must mainly be attributed the cause of their failure in awakening our sympathies. If another reason were sought, it would be found in the nature of the subjects chosen. The Hindoo superstitions upon which these poems are founded are strange and unnatural, and altogether unknown except to the more advanced reader. With the Grecian mythology most are familiar, but with the extravagant creeds of the East few are even slightly acquainted. There is, moreover, a gracefulness about the one which the other is entirely deficient in. The religion of the Greeks does not offend against Nature, the creations of the Hindoos are gross and improbable. In "Madoc" and "Don Roderick" the dramatic art is wanting, which renders the dialogues flat and uninteresting. Still in the latter poem there is much nature and truth, and it is by far the best of Southey's larger poetical works. Of his minor poems there are many that will remain favourites, but over his laureate odes the veil of oblivion has long and justly been drawn.

In his prose works, however, Southey has erected the most durable monument to his fame and memory.

Their number is legion, and they embrace a wide and diversified field of subjects. The lives of Nelson, Wesley, and Cowper, are masterpieces in biography. The diction is fluent and rhythmical, and the narratives are in an easy and familiar style. In delineating character, which he does with great truthfulness and perspicuity, Southey exhibits considerable power.

But the most conspicuous and elaborate of his works is the "History of Brazil," a book that he wrote *con amore*. It forms a branch of the more extensive "History of Portugal," which he had no leisure to complete. The materials from which this work was constructed had been collected by his uncle, the Rev. Herbert Hill, were unrivalled in value, and accessible to him alone. No political bias interrupted the straightforwardness and breadth of his judgment, and his poetic fervour found scope in the character of the clime, the productions of the soil, and the features of savage life, which he describes in the most glowing colours. The "Book of the Church" will always be admired for its elegant flow of language, though it is admitted to be but a partial view of the subject it treats. In his "Colloquies" he has shown the unpopularity of such works for conveying political principles; and in his account of Doctor Daniel Dove, an imitation of "Tristram Shandy," he has disclosed his power of connecting odd learning and quaint information with agreeable tact. The descriptions of locality are graphic, the tale of love is well told,

and it is a book of many and curious virtues. To the "Quarterly Review" he contributed, in the course of his long connexion with it, nearly a hundred papers. These all exhibited great research, and were powerfully written. We may sincerely regret that the production of these articles consumed time that would have given us the "History of the Monastic Orders," and the "History of Portugal."

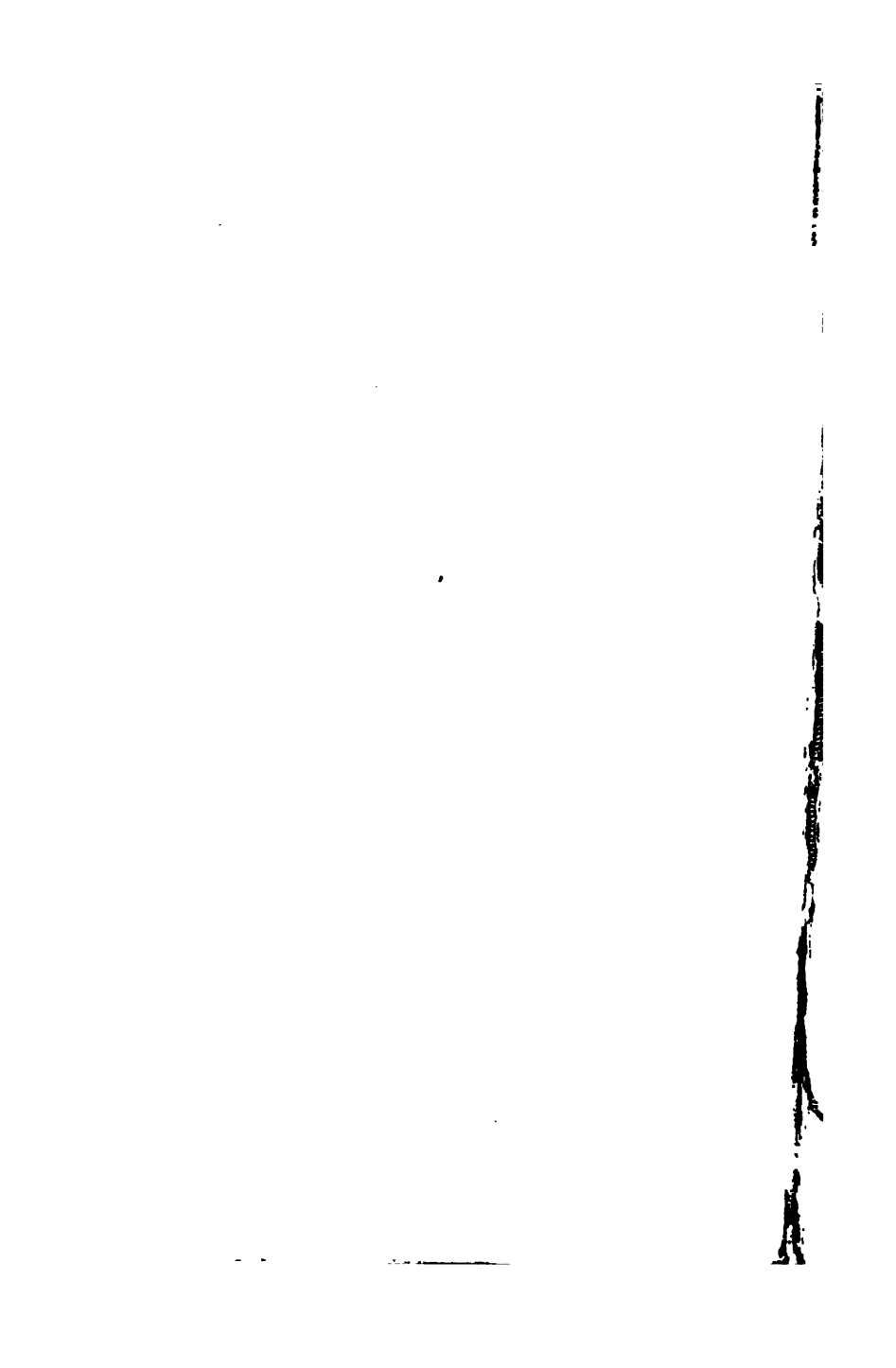
The death of Southey broke up the household of Greta Hall. On the 8th of May, 1844, commenced the sale of his extensive and valuable library, which continued fifteen days, and realised the sum of 2900*l*. for his family. Yet the spot of his long sojourn, the place of his unwearied literary labours, is annually the shrine of many pilgrims. Dr. Mackay visited it after it had been deserted, and in his "Scenery and Poetry of the English Lakes" gives a description of the habitation, and his own feelings on finding it desolate. When he arrived there he found some of the shutters closed, and all newly painted; "and on looking through one of the windows we saw," he says, "a newly-painted and papered room, without furniture, and as if it had been but a moment before evacuated by painters and carpenters. This gave us hope that we could procure admission without disturbing any one, or appearing guilty of intrusiveness or incivility, of which there would have been some risk if the house had been inhabited. As, however, we were not certain that there

was any one inside—all our efforts to procure admission by knocking with our hands on the doors and windows having failed—we walked through the garden at the back of the house, reflecting reverently that we stood on hallowed ground. The reflection was mournful. The garden was neglected; it showed that he, and she also,—the amiable hostess who had loved to tend it,—had departed. It was uncropped, and going into the rank luxuriance of weeds, and showed at every turn the want of the hand of its former mistress. In the midst of our stroll amid its deserted walks we saw a workman with a key in his hand coming up the avenue, and proceeding to meet him, we asked whether we could procure admission. He replied in the affirmative, and offered to conduct us over the house, which he informed us was to be let. As he seemed to think we had come on business, and had a desire of looking at the house for the purpose of hiring it, we undeceived him in this particular, and told him that curiosity alone, and respect for the memory of its late illustrious occupant, had induced us to trouble him. The man was intelligent and very obliging; and though but a journeyman painter, seemed as fully impressed as we were with the greatness of the claim that Robert Southey had upon the affectionate remembrance of posterity. He told us that very many persons visited the house solely on this account; and that there was, he thought, scarcely a tourist to the lake district who did

not make a point of coming into the garden at least, though most of them lacked courage to demand admission into the house. The garden, he said, had suffered severely from the reverence of travellers, and the ladies especially carried away flowers and leaves of shrubs, to preserve as mementos ; so that he feared, if the house were not let in a year or two, there would not be a shrub or a flower left. This worthy fellow led us over the building, which was large and commodious ; showed us the kitchen, the wine-cellar, the dining-room, the drawing-room, and the study ; each of which recalled painfully to our minds—at least they did so to mine—the bodily absence of one whose spirit yet spoke to mankind, and exerted an influence on their thoughts. The room that had been the library was especially painful to reflect upon. The marks on the walls where the shelves had been fitted were still uneffaced by the painter's brush, but the beloved books which it had been the pleasure of his life to collect were all dispersed ; and not one, or a shred of one, was left behind of the many thousands that had formerly made the spot a living temple of literature. It would have been worth preserving for Keswick ; and I thought, and still think, that if the town had been rich enough to make the purchase of the whole property, it would have conferred upon itself not only an honour, but an advantage. We were afterwards led into several smaller apartments, and among others into a room of a very

peculiar shape,—a long, narrow, parallelogram, with a door in one corner, and a solitary window, looking into the garden, at the other, and allowing, from the thickness of the foliage outside, but little light to penetrate into the interior. I asked for what purpose this room had been used, and was told that it had been a bedroom. ‘He died there—exactly where you are standing,’ said the painter. I felt my cheeks tingle as he spoke. I drew back involuntarily from the spot with a feeling of awe, and as involuntarily, for I did not know or think at the time what I was doing, took off my hat. I saw my companion doing the same. The painter, moved by our example, took off his paper cap; and so all stood for some minutes, with a reverence which I am quite sure was sincere on the part of myself and my friend, and which, I verily believe, the painter felt as much as we did.”





ND BY
A SON,
STREET,
DON.



